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CONTACT PHASE:
FORMS OF POSTMODERNISM
VOLUME I

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by
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Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of Brian Drago, a true friend whose interest in this project went unrewarded, due to his untimely death.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines variant mimetic strategies as the basis for a major dialectic within postmodern culture. The method applies and sometimes extends largely accepted theoretical statements on literary form. This synthesis provides an accessible, if at times complex, schema for organizing types, genres, and postmodern products based on image production and forms of spatial/temporal discourse.

An investigation of several theorists and artists grounds a theory of literary and cinematic expressionism as the basis for postmodern culture, with particular emphasis given to the interpenetration of literary and cinematic styles in the twentieth century. An aesthetic dialectic emerges in the movement toward literary expressionism as opposed to mimetic naturalism. The expressionistic work is inherently metatextual and, consequently, more directly discursive. Expressionism has followed its own line of development throughout literary history. The eventual reliance of expressionism on the "material image" as a vehicle for signification carries with it a profound transformation of ideas about verbal culture, as well as aesthetic methods and analytical categories (Benjamin, Bakhtin, Ong, and Hillman contribute). The title comes from the "contact" function, Jakobson's term for the use of medial presentation.

This dissertation contains two volumes. The first volume is largely theoretical, including three chapters. The first chapter discusses relationships between Jakobson's model and contemporary theory. The second chapter includes a dialectical history of naturalism, expressionism, discourse, and intertextuality. The third chapter considers postmodern forms, dream texts, and textual arrays; it also includes a generic classification system for images: "The Image-Genre Grid."

The second volume applies the theory of the first volume to a comparison of Kafka and Beckett as writers who reveal the inherent indeterminacy of the material image. Chapter four considers Kafka's preoccupation with dream texts and his consequent anticipation of surrealism. Chapter five examines Beckett as a theoretical writer whose texts present a metatextual language.

PART ONE: THE IMAGE OF TEXT

CHAPTER ONE

JAKOBSON'S MODEL AND CONTEMPORARY THEORY

Introduction

Although the term "postmodernism" conveys some controversial elements, it also denotes fundamental transformations and innovations of cultural forms during the twentieth century by proclaiming its difference from a monolithic "modernism." Clearly, the term "postmodernism" developed as both antithesis and elaboration of "modernism." Consequently, postmodernism, insofar as it has depended on concepts of modernity for its own formulations, has been plagued by imprecision and controversy, especially since it has become a rubric for "non-canonical" or "marginalized" texts, texts of uncertain "literary" merit. This study attempts to clarify matters through a synthesis of several theorists and artists.

Cinema has produced new approaches to text production and interpretation. Cinematic technology marks the historical change, characteristic of the twentieth century, which has contributed to broad developments in thought and technology that have transformed cultural perspectives.

Martin Heidegger in his essay "The Question Concerning Technology" concludes:

> the question concerning technology is the question concerning the constellation in which revealing and concealing, in which the coming to presence of truth, comes to pass (33).

He further concludes that the term techne ought to be understood as not only containing the concept of the technical, as artifice or technique, but also as including the revelation and concealment of this "coming to presence of truth." Heidegger makes clear that the manifestation of this techne takes place in the realm of art, rather than science, which is usually associated with technology:

> because the essence of technology is nothing technological, essential reflection upon technology and decisive confrontation with it must happen in a realm that is, on the one hand, akin to the essence of technology and, on the other, fundamentally different from it. . . . Such a realm is art (35).

There is a sense in which Heidegger's techne as a paradoxical formulation of "truth" as revelation and concealment can be understood as phases of revelation and concealment: "in Greece, at the outset of the destining of the West, the arts soared to the supreme height of the revealing granted them" (34). This "height" corresponds to the technological development of literacy, of writing systems or verbal technology. The development of cinematic or "imagist" technology parallels the encompassing power of the impact of literacy itself.

This study recognizes four phases or modes of cultural production which have significantly transformed the means of cultural production and its products: orality, literacy, print, and cinema. Each phase has engendered the phase subsequent to it, and each phase has transformed its cultural landscape. No very complex material technology (compared to later modes) was required to transcribe spoken language into writing, yet the conceptual changes brought about by this shift are formidable, as Ong has shown (see Orality and Literacy 78-81, 96-101). The written word engendered the library (and conceptual means for classification) and the concept of the university. Print and cinema do require complex material technologies, and each of these modes corresponds, respectively, to the initial and to the international forms of industrialization, marked by mass (re)production.

Moreover, each of these phases of cultural production has engendered its own form of aesthetic "modernism" (see below "The Precession of Modernisms"). The aural word gave way to the visual word, with all its logical complexities. Eventually, print promoted the vision of the word as an image of itself, and the image of the word, in turn, yielded to the images of the world and of consciousness. Not only have succeeding phases changed the dominant forms of cultural production, but all of these phases contribute to an increasingly complex aggregate of cultural forms in which

each phase is further transformed by other phases, hence Ong's formulation of "secondary orality," an effect of the cinematic age, and the advent of "screenplay" styles in the novel and the development of graphic novels, other cinematic effects (Ong 160).[1.1]

This study finds that aesthetic descriptions of cinema have largely derived from an elaboration in terms of verbal categories, in a form of concealment. Film theorists, such as Metz and Kawin, have heightened sensitivities to the subtleties of filmic presentation, but this has come at the expense of the incorporation of cinema into verbal systems of linguistics and narrative theory. Metz, for one, in his more recent work has gotten somewhat beyond this in his analyses (see Psychoanalysis and Cinema; there is also a discussion of Metz in Chapter three). Such work is significant, for "cinema . . . is always written," yet the tendency to view cinema as a mere extension of verbal or print culture invites fundamental error (Brunette and Wills 61). Freddy Sweet quotes George Bluestone who says "where the novel discourses, the film must picture" (56). In this case, Bluestone's "view" of filmic representation as perception skews one's understanding of cinema, which is also an inherently discursive medium.

Roman Jakobson, in an essay written on the development of the sound film, emphasizes that objects represented in film are actually signs taking "the path of metonymy or

metaphor" ("Is The Film In Decline?" 733-4). Also, these signs, related through "montage to the semiotic interrelation of things," implicate discourse as an element of the filmic surface (734). Jakobson's formulation is theoretically anterior to Walter Benjamin's conception of allegory or James Hillman's discussion of metaphor with respect to the image, and the principal difference is the linguistic specificity implied by the terms "metonymy" or "metaphor," a specificity which both Benjamin and Hillman resist. A "sail" in a filmic context may represent something other than the "ship" of which it is a part, just as Melville's Pequod goes beyond its literal representation as a "machine" in a capital enterprise to metaphorically embrace other things as diverse as the state, states of consciousness, and even literary representation itself.[1.2] This insufficiency of linguistic specificity is sharply foregrounded by post-cinematic literature, particularly by Samuel Beckett's novel The Unnamable and its dramatic counterpart Endgame (see Chapter Five).

Gradually, cinema has come to be revealed as a form of cultural transformation, and this revelation brings with it a need to reconceptualize cultural production in terms of cinematic categories that recognize the primacy of the image, as do Benjamin and Hillman. Paul Coates sums up this dynamic of revelation and concealment, of recognition of cinematic transformations and subsequent reification:

> film studies once promised to be an open forum for reflection upon the separate arts and cultural domains. Instead, once exciting theories have been deprived of their speculative status and frozen into an orthodoxy that needs to be challenged in the name of the very theorists it takes as canonic. A Barthes or a Benjamin would surely have been appalled by his work's cooption by the academy. All too often complacent orthodoxy speaks of difference and excludes anything that differs. . . . to speak of Theory rather than theories is to pursue the fata morgana of an impossible totalization; whereas in fact the project of totalization would be better served by a multiplicity of perspectives (ix).

Recent literary history demonstrates how from the late nineteenth century onwards myriad groups and aesthetic movements have sought to distinguish themselves from a monolithic designation of "modernism" (see Chapter Two). This widespread contention is copresent with the development of cinematic technology. This study finds that Walter Benjamin's essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" contains strong theoretical concepts relating to (post)modern forms and to the art of cinema. This study seeks to interpret, extend, and synthesize Benjamin's work with other strong theoretical statements provided by Jacobson, Ong, Bakhtin, and Hillman (and to a lesser extent with others, such as Auerbach, McLuhan, Trotsky and Derrida, see Chapter Three).

This study proposes to revise and to rehabilitate conceptions of modernism and postmodernism and to bring to bear a more precise analysis on this rhetorical polemic in cultural studies. The method involves a synthesis and, at

times, an extension of strong theoretical formulations of problematic literary issues. Technological developments will provide a means for grounding developments of literary and historical consciousness that are manifested as cultural products. Types of discourse, problems of genre and signification, and the impact of cinema on literary production will provide the focus for this study.

The postmodern has often been questioned as to whether it is sufficiently distinguishable from modernism, especially when modernism is defined as an umbrella covering the wide diversity of styles in the first half of the twentieth century. Postmodernism clearly develops from modernist tendencies, yet it seeks to differentiate itself from the conceptual stage to the product stage from the more revered forms of modernism. Postmodernism is often characterized by desacralization and politicization against modernist reliance on the sublime, preservation of sacral tradition, and stylistic elitism and isolationism.

The institutionalization or reification of certain "modernist" styles effects a discursive privileging of specific stylists; for example, Yeats, Pound, and Eliot enjoy a higher regard within academia than do Joyce, Beckett, and Kafka. This differential in valuation within institutional contexts indicates a discursive differential common to these sets of authors, especially since the conditions of "literary quantity and quality" are strictly

comparable. This discursive differential ought to be recognized as types of alternate discourse, as distinguishable movements of the "modernist" impulse. Lyotard recognizes the phenomenon of the postmodern as one common to the twentieth century, citing Joyce, Proust, and Duchamp (among others 79-80). It may even be, as Lyotard suggests, that modernism itself derives from a postmodernist impulse "according to the paradox of the future (post) anterior (modo)" (81). Nevertheless the discursive effects of twentieth-century cultural production are recognizable within the context of contemporary political discourses: some are more amenable to canonical tradition, and some are more resistant to this touchstone of institutional and political favor.

Freud shows that the past dies hard, and writers like Marquez in One Hundred Years of Solitude prove it by detailing the ongoing slaughter of recent history. Such fundamentally antagonistic discourses derive from an alternative, political context, and these discourses employ different forms to achieve such ends. The incorporative gestures of the "monolithic modernists" tend to minimize differences between radically different political stances or ideologies by granting all an innovative status which does not pursue too closely the political ends with which the various texts are associated.

Fredric Jameson's elaboration of ideological stances with respect to modernism and postmodernism bears witness to the politicization of these categories, although he finds:

> that most of the political positions which we have found to inform what is most often conducted as an aesthetic debate are in reality moralizing ones, which seek to develop final judgments on the phenomenon of postmodernism, whether the latter is stigmatized as corrupt or on the other hand saluted as a culturally and aesthetically healthy and positive form of innovation (425).

Although this debate, as Jameson indicates, is largely a canonical one, definite political consequences follow from the disenfranchisement of cultural products (texts) by those institutions which these products often radically critique. It is no wonder that this canonical debate continues since the academy and the technocracy with which it is allied prefer the more abstracted ethos and the more appreciative view of classicism associated with "modernism" to "postmodern" attacks on classicism and ethical complacency, whether they be subtler, as with Kafka and Beckett, or more specifically vituperative, as with Pynchon and Burroughs. Political effects follow this academic debate: students find that there is no discussion of writers with whom they may be familiar, a narrowing of free academic discourse; also some rather quirky literary history develops when writers like Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac are described as the major writers of the Beat movement, without reference to Burroughs.[1.3]

Jameson insists:

> we are within the culture of postmodernism to the point where its facile repudiation is as impossible as any equally facile celebration of it is complacent and corrupt. Ideological judgment on postmodernism today necessarily implies, one would think, a judgment on ourselves as well as on the artifacts in question (425).

By this insistence Jameson implicates the heightened subjective focus which is a hallmark of postmodernism, although, perhaps, he would wish otherwise, for the term "judgment" tends not to be associated with subjectivity. Alternately, for Kafka, "judgment" is wholly subjective, a point emphasized throughout The Trial and one acutely realized in his story "The Judgment," which is a literal presentation of a Freudian dream. Nevertheless, within the postmodern the subjective ground is also a highly politicized, historical consciousness, one that questions the traditionally objective illusion of history by exposing its subjective roots. Modernist works tend toward a de facto historical complacency expressed through cultural specialization: history is history and literature is literature. Eliot's The Waste Land, for example, tends not to consider the historical context of its alienated protagonist by focusing on a spiritual discontent that is shored up by a Miltonic system of allusions, which, though often obscure, tend to incorporate traditional literature.

A recognition of the subjective, historical dialectic is the chief virtue of Linda Hutcheon's A Poetics Of Postmodernism in which postmodernism is characterized as:

> historiographic metafiction, like both historical fiction and narrative history, cannot avoid dealing with the problem of the status of their "facts" and of the nature of their evidence, their documents. And, obviously, the related issue is how those documentary sources are deployed: can they be objectively, neutrally related? (122).

She further explains that:

> historiography and fiction . . . constitute their obects of attention. . . . The postmodern problematization points to our unavoidable difficulties with the concreteness of events.

Hutcheon's discussion of various theories of postmodernism and her profusion of examples illustrate many features of this subjective-historical dialectic, but her study and this one differ in some important ways.

While this study agrees with Hutcheon's characterization of the postmodern as "resolutely historical, and inescapably political," it does not so easily find it to be "contradictory," unless this term is an English usage indicating its oppositional or dialectical qualities. Moreover, the localization of the postmodern to "European and American (North and South)" cultures seems too facile a generalization. The cinematic age increases cultural internationalism, and Bakhtin has shown how an international quality is already constitutive of the novel (11-2). However, this point is raised here without much support, for the scope of this study does not include

African or Asian products as counterexamples, but neither does it expect such examples to be too few to notice.

More problematic is the temporal localization of Hutcheon's work, which smacks of academicism. There is a presumption of monolithic modernism underlying her study. "Modernists like Joyce and Eliot" and modernism's "compulsion to write mixed with a realization of the meaninglessness of writing (in the work of Kafka and Beckett)" are remarks that both lump together writers of radically different political discourses and show a lack of sensitivity to the ways in which Kafka and Beckett constitute meaning outside of literary convention (6, 43). Also, for all her examples of postmodern writing, there is not a single reference to Burroughs, who was clearly influenced by Kafka and who himself influenced some of her exemplars, especially Thomas Pynchon. This attempt to date the postmodern as an exclusively contemporary phenomenon and this exclusion of major writers widely associated with the postmodern impulse implicate Hutcheon in a participation in the canonical debate disparaged by Jameson, although Jameson himself can be rather eccentric in his appellation of particular styles.[1.4]

This study emphasizes the works of Kafka and Beckett as fundamentally constitutive of the postmodern creative impulse through their applications of new theoretical concepts informing their texts' production of meaning and

through textual strategies to make explicit alternative, political discourses. While Kafka and Beckett present some common qualities, each also possesses unique qualities which suggest how each theorized the making of text within a cinematic context. Deleuze and Guattari have described this alternative theorization and praxis as the impulse toward a "minor literature" (Kafka 16-7).

Another difficulty with Hutcheon's view of the postmodern involves the status of the term "metafiction" itself. Writing about "fiction" is less "fictional" and more "discursive"; metafiction is formal writing in which the fictional element is problematized. Expressionism proliferates metafictional strategies which all tend to involve more deeply the audience in the presentation. Freddy Sweet describes one metafictional strategy, en abime structures, as a "layering of reality and fiction" (18). Sweet mentions the second part of Cervantes' Don Quixote and Gide's The Counterfeiters where "fiction and life fold in on each other." As in Hamlet's play-within-the-play, the framing of additional structures within the play's presentation reduces the distance between the audience and the presentation itself, and fictional elements are deemphasized in favor of a broader, discursive participation: the audience is brought into more direct contact with the formal level of the writing.

This continuous, discursive engagement is a different type of reception than that more literal form in which the audience reads the fictional elements and then considers discursive values derived from those elements. Metafiction engages its audience on a critical level, not just on a literal level. An emphasis on the "fictional" element of metafiction is misplaced in that it creates distance between audience and presentation, resulting in a confusion of fictional structures. Such an emphasis is one way of investing a work with an "aura," in Benjamin's sense, promoting authorial power out of proportion and excluding the audience from meaningful engagement with the work.

Academic pedagogy would benefit from a broader recognition of the pervasiveness of metafiction in twentieth-century literature. To its credit, Elements of Literature (an academic anthology for students, Oxford, fourth edition) includes a short section on metafiction, discussing its paradoxical qualities as a blend of realism and fiction (493). However, its characterization of metafiction as a form of "reading" apparently absolves the editors from the inclusion of this category in the general literary model presented in the beginning of this text. This model, which presents two verbal axes of which one polarizes "words used to create imaginary persons and events" and "words used to express ideas and feelings" while the other polarizes "words addressed directly to the reader"

and "words overheard by the reader," attempts to order the genres of story, play, essay, and poem (xxx).

The results are somewhat disappointing. This model suffers from its fairly arbitrary distinction between imagination and expression; for Croce, for example, expression is the presentation of the (largely intuitive) imagination (see Chapter Three). The editors of this anthology apply film to all their generic categories, implying two conclusions: one) that film is easily analyzed via verbal categories and two) that film may be equivalent to metafiction (xxxi). The first of these is weak; many attempts to theorize film through verbal categories lead to problematic assertions (again, see Chapter Three on Metz). The second is an important concept in this study, but the editors of Elements of Literature do not consider this connection. Students need theoretical concepts which do not displace confusion from one area to another. The editors of this anthology deserve praise for their attempt to be inclusive by bringing postmodern forms into consideration, but their theoretical apparatus is not able to handle the complexities that result from this inclusion. This study seeks to present categories that are sensitive to the complexities of postmodern culture and that are sufficiently flexible to promote meaningful discussion.

Although there is no space here to comprehensively consider the many propositions of postmodernism (Hutcheon's

study is quite thorough in this regard), some remarks on the architectural model of the postmodern may be helpful. Jameson privileges architectural "terrain" as "the most stategic field in which this concept has been debated and its consequences explored" (420). Nevertheless, there is a sense of default in this privileging which follows his assertion that "a dissolution of linear narrative, a repudiation of representation, and a 'revolutionary' break with the (repressive) ideology of storytelling generally" is inadequate to account for stylistic differences of artists like Burroughs, Pynchon, Beckett, Reed, the French nouveau roman and its variations, the "non-fiction novel" the "New Narrative," and, possibly, "nostalgia art" (419-20). All of the writers he mentions by name are treated to a greater or lesser extent in this study, which seeks to provide discursive categories by which these writers can be understood both in their stylistic differences, which often are not as great as they may appear, and in their relations to each other.

As far as the other forms are concerned, some are more "ideologically" postmodern than others. If postmodernism has become culturally dominant, then postmodern forms may be used to transmit "retro" ideologies. Television may be a postmodern medium, but this does not preclude its presentation of fascist political messages. Orson Welles' Home Box Office documentary on Nostradamus, a chilling and

provocative inquiry, was recut (literally over his dead body) and aired on network television to suggest that Nostradamus had "prophesied" a successful outcome for the United States in the Gulf War. Such an imperialistic ideology goes very much against the grain of postmodern characteristics, elaborated by Jameson above, but, clearly, the producers of this "documentary" were unconcerned about the "strain" between form and content.

Jameson successfully elaborates ideological responses to postmodernism; he should also recognize that the ideological discourse of postmodern products needs to be elaborated with regard to particular works. Beckett, Burroughs, Pynchon, and Reed, however individual their styles may be, all share strong discursive views expressed through their satires (one form they have in common), but this determination is built upon a thorough examination of their works, not a perception of stylistic differences.

Benjamin notes the importance of architecture as an aesthetic touchstone, though he believes that film is accomplishing more with respect to the masses at the time of his essay ("Work of Art" 239-40). Evidently, the field of architecture, which produced the term "postmodern," has caught up with film these days, but postmodernism is a broad, cultural phenomenon that transforms all art.

The dialectic between modernism and postmodernism is most strident concerning modernism's conservation of

traditional ideologies, for these contending movements are not at odds in their spirit of innovation, as Lyotard shows. The methods and results of "innovation" are the objects of the postmodern, discursive dialogue, and the maintenance of this dialectical, ideological engagement is an important feature of the postmodern movement. The postmodern writer may allude to the "classics": both Beckett and Burroughs allude to Shakespeare's The Tempest (Prospero's speech "Our revels now are ended," IV. i. 146-58). Both also allude to Eliot. Significantly, in the allusion from The Tempest, the emphasis is on dreams: Beckett quotes the line above in Endgame; later, he alludes to Eliot's "The Hollow Men" ("Hamm: Then let it end! . . . With a bang!"), and Eliot's The Waste Land is satirized in "Whoroscope" (946, 952, see Chapter five for "Whoroscope"). Jennie Skerl brings out the allusions to both The Tempest and The Waste Land in "Pay Color," the final "routine" of Burroughs' Nova Express (68-9). All these allusions are to expressionistic passages; though some of these allusions are more contentious than others, they all indicate their authors to be in some dialogically engaged relation to these expressionistic sources. This may represent a difference from architectural allusion described by Jameson; in literature, classical or traditional recuperation is a hallmark of modernism ("Tiresias" in The Waste Land). Usually, postmodernists most strongly allude to other postmodernists or to

expressionistic passages in more canonical writers; this is discussed at more length in Chapter Three, "Intertextual Arrays." The salient feature of the postmodern here is the inclusion of ideological dialectics as an integral part of postmodern presentations.

The dialectical methods of Hegel and Marx have gained a wide theoretical currency, and most forms of the modernist/postmodernist dialogue occur as polar oppositions, including Jameson's. Hutcheon is something of an exception to this in her postmodern formulation, but she is only partly successful in her investigation of logical relations between polar qualities other than opposition. Part of the reason for this involves theoretical relativity. The constraint of a linear language tends to cause theorists to draw their distinctions with broad strokes, but the application of these theories to particular texts alleviates this tendency. Often, a strong theoretical formulation will prompt a revisioning such that works under consideration will yield to the theory unexpected results. Bakhtin's distinction between monological discourse and dialogical discourse remains a strong one supported by textual analysis, but it also promotes the recognition that even monological discourse is somewhat dialogical. This is apparent in Ong's work on oral literature where an agonistic character to oral presentations not only suggests contention between individuals but also language's attempt to

concretize subjectivity into the formal illusion of objectivity.

If any single word could conjure the spirit of literary-theoretical investigation, that word would be "dualism." In this digital age of binary information processing, literary theory presents polar models that bifurcate areas of inquiry into extreme manifestations, and the progression of literary studies continues as a dynamic dialogue or dialectic between these polar manifestations. Among even the most radical theoretical revisions, such as deconstruction, this trend is a prominent subject. Jacques Derrida in "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" concludes:

> there are thus two interpretations of interpretation, of structure, of sign, of freeplay. The one seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering, a truth or an origin which is free from freeplay and from the order of the sign, and lives like an exile the necessity of interpretation. The other, which is no longer turned toward the origin, affirms freeplay and tries to pass beyond man and humanism, the name man being the name of that being who, throughout the history of metaphysics or of ontotheology -- in other words, through the history of all his history -- has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring foundation, the origin and the end of the game (264-65).[1.5]

Derrida identifies polar oppositions of discursive stances and provides a dualistic model of contemporary discourse. The game of interpretation becomes a dynamic registering the dialectical exchanges of these divergent perspectives. Rather than disparage the apparent necessity of these

dualistic formulations, this study seeks to consolidate the considerable and valuable contributions of various dualistic models into a more unified system which no longer considers literature and literary criticism as ultimately divergent fields and which no longer needs to view signification only in the superficial sense of direct correspondence, such that we know how many eggs are contained in a dozen. As it becomes more apparent that our understanding of language itself limits our ability to conceptualize, the more urgent grows the need not to be constrained by its limitations. This consolidation and synthesis is offered in the spirit of beginning to move on into a new potentiality for expression. This systemic approach distinguishes two types of discourse: (one) naturalism which corresponds to objectivism, to a discourse mediated by mimetic imitation, to the story element in literature, and (two) expressionism which takes the dream as its subject, recognizes subjectivity as inherent to all discourse, and presents itself directly as formal and rhetorical discourse through its multitude of divergent surfaces, representing a convergence of real and unreal.

In the "material image," a synthesis between Walter Benjamin's mechanically reproduced image of cinema and James Hillman's psychic image (developed at more length below and in Chapter three), signification comes about less through direct correspondence than through joint participation, a

kind of collaboration between the producer and the receiver of a work. The material image brings this about by withholding a sense of closure (correspondence requires closure). Consequently, one must directly interpret the discourse of this image, rather than (as is the case with closure) decipher the literality of a text. Such a procedure transforms conceptions of literality itself and even of language.

Traditionally verbal conceptions of literature promoted strong correspondences between word and referent, but these verbal conceptions are dialectically opposed by visual conceptions that produce images and that promote associations. Visual production has attained its Heideggerian "technological moment." The recognition of this ascendence by visual production invites a reevaluation of earlier, logocentric forms from an expressionistic perspective, creating a discursive typology in which logocentric realism differentiates from expressionistic surrealism. An exciting, aesthetic consequence of this typology is that the field of creative endeavor can be elaborated in a more precise and inclusive way than that which results from individual systems based solely on verbal or on visual categories (see Chapter Three, "The Image-Genre Grid").

An important discursive consequence of this typology impacts epistemology through the reevaluation of perception

and representation. The cultural profusion of dream images produced by visual technology concretizes into an amalgam in which images attain a dual status of perception and representation. Derrida has questioned the existence of perception, and this study finds that representation remains in the absence of perception (272, see also Chapter Five, "Film"). Traditionally, dream images were not considered perceptions, but they are representations, especially as literary ones. This study documents the stages of this verbal/visual dialectic to show how these components produced a culture called postmodernism.

Jakobson's Model

The past generation of literary studies has provided many explicit and implicit dualistic approaches to literary analysis. An examination of some of these approaches in relation to Jakobson's communication model shows how important new concepts emerge and how these conceptions tend toward a destabilization with respect to each other, a paradoxical result. Ong explains that "the paradox of human communication" results from the recognition that "communication is intersubjective," but "the media model is not" (177). Jakobson arrays his "fundamental" functions for communication in the following manner:

REFERENTIAL

EMOTIVE POETIC CONATIVE

PHATIC

METALINGUAL

("Linguistics and Poetics" 27).

Although theoretical progress has brought sweeping revision to Jakobson's original model of communication functions, these changes are most apparent in theoretical recognition of the prominence of the phatic function, from which this study derives its title Contact Phase.

Christine Brooke-Rose suggests that reference to Roman Jakobson's six-function model for communications helps to clarify the orientations of various schools (22-29). She elaborates Jakobson's model, which resembles a cross:

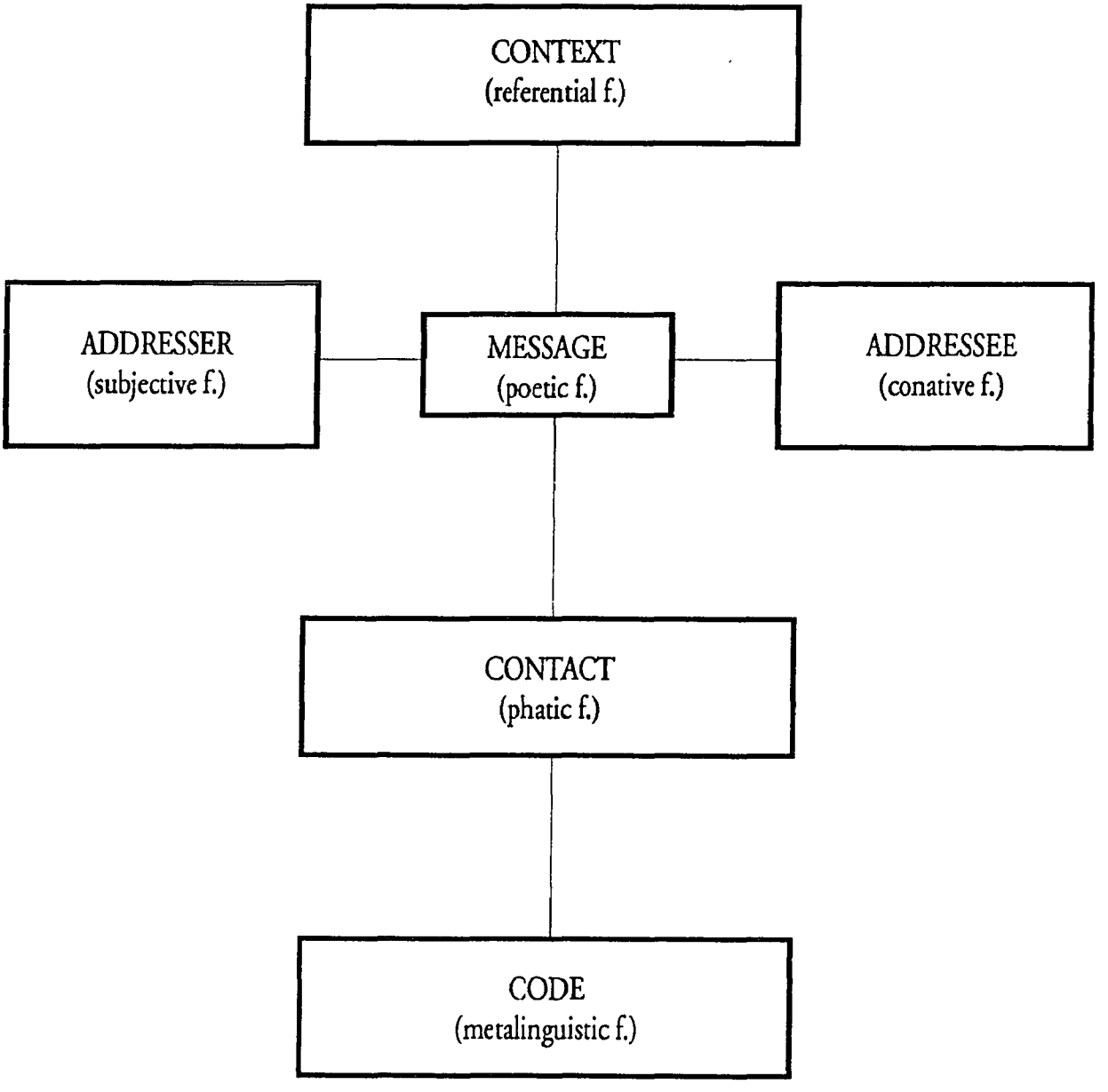


FIGURE 1. BROOKE-ROSE'S PRESENTATION OF JAKOBSON'S MODEL

Brooke-Rose explains that for Jakobson all forms of communication, including language, consist of these six functions and that he assigned different aspects of language to particular functions; likewise, his critical practice involved assigning different literary genres to particular functions. Although he conceded that some overlapping occurred, he usually applied the model to demonstrate how specific functions related to discourses.

There are difficulties with such an approach because the application of any literary theory to literature itself derives ambiguous results in certain instances; the model requires as much interpretation as the text to which it is applied. Also, it is easy to distrust a model which confines a text to a category based upon an interpreted emphasis, as it appears was Jakobson's practice. A common example of such a method occurs if one takes New Criticism as a theory focused on text because it insists on the objectification of text, when New Criticism also explores the complexities of interpretation, conserves elements of traditional criticism through an interest in biography and autobiography, and reexamines contexts and codes through a refinement of literary terms (organic form, irony, ambiguity, and so on). It makes sense to view Jakobson's functions as simultaneously present in the text, since it is from the text that these functions are derived, and Brooke-

Rose explains: "[current practice] tries, not always successfully, to integrate all the six aspects" (29).

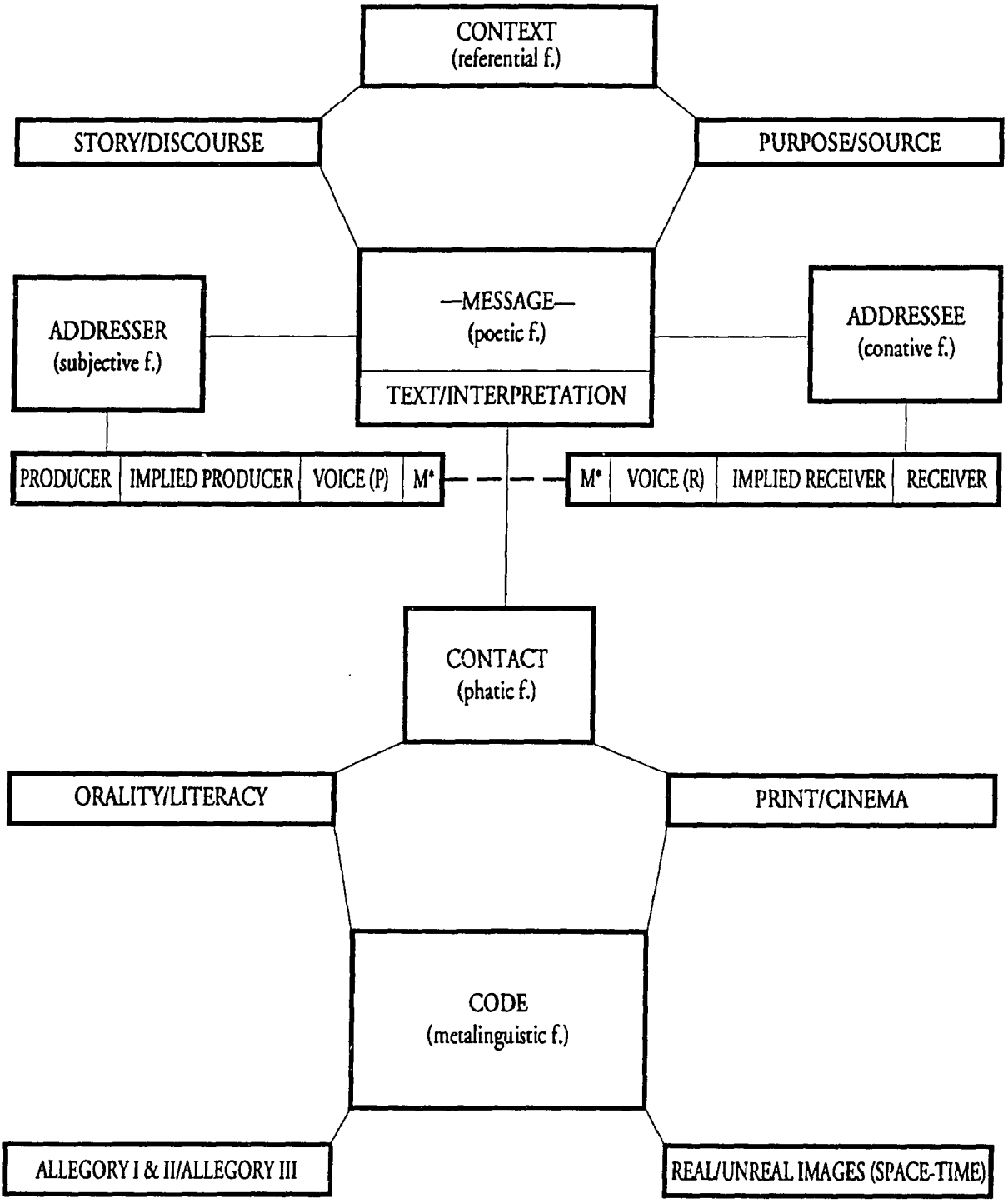
In literary presentations, "message" depends on "context" (as well as on other elements), and an apparently simple declarative phrase like "black cat" can be loaded with discursive functions, functions which do not disappear with the omission of the adjective "black." In a Freudian dream analysis, "black cat" may refer specifically and simultaneously to genital organs, bad luck, anger and/or lust. This dream image provokes a complex of associations. Such imagery operates at a level of discourse <u>other</u> than that which is typically connected with a more precise referentiality of language.

Like a Freudian dream, notions about language more often imply the wish for a clear reference rather than its actual provision. The dream image provides a complex referentiality that communicates quantitatively more than the words which describe the image convey, and the dream image must always be described in order to enter into any discourse (see below, "Contact"). Indeed, language has the "dreams of deciphering, a truth or an origin" as its "<u>raison d'etre</u>" while dreams portray the complexity of the world in a profusion of images. The literary and cinematic production of oneiric images is crucial to the analysis of expressionistic discourse. Chapter Three and Part Two of

this study examine how dreams are fundamental to the establishment of postmodern culture.

Jakobson's Model and Contemporary Theory

Brooke-Rose discusses how various schools of criticism have focused on specific aspects of Jakobson's model, and she describes the relationship of traditional criticism to the subjective (authorial) function, of New Criticism to the poetic (text) function, of linguistic criticism to the metalinguistic (code) function (24-26). Obviously, reader-response criticism explicitly orients itself to the conative function (reader/spectator), but these simple correspondences belie the complexity of some theoretical systems. The shortcomings of such an approach to New Criticism have been noted above; the integral complexities of this system get lost, collapsed into a vulgarization of "text." Various formulations of literary theory have emphasized particular functions, though often not only single functions, and these have usually presented dualistic formulations of their emphases. If, however, a useful simplification is made, along the lines of Brooke-Rose's method, of assigning particular concepts to particular functions according to each concept's emphasis, then Jakobson's model can help to structure an array:



**M respresents MESSAGE, or, more precisely, TEXT*

FIGURE 2. CONTEMPORARY MODIFICATIONS TO JAKOBSON'S MODEL

Context

Beginning from the top of the model, the context, or the referential function, which for Jakobson included third person pronouns and all declarative sentences, must now be considered in a different light of referentiality (Brooke-Rose 23). As with the example of the Freudian dream, an understanding of referentiality requires an understanding of the context of the "context," for Jakobson bases contextual referentiality on the reference to a real or natural world that is connected to the utterance.

This problem of reference has been theoretically qualified in various ways; one common method involves distinguishing form from content. The question "what does the story say" has two answers: one is the plot or content and the other the lesson or the discourse of the story, its form. A clear reference ought to be connected to one field or to the other. Both pertain to the real or natural world, but even with this qualification the actual context often remains unclear, due to theoretical ambiguities: fictional detail or ethical proposition? Moreover, without this "realistic" constraint, as with an "imagined" world, the status of a reference is harder to determine (the Freudian "black cat"), although such a reference is more likely to be discursive than a mere content element.

When a plot is incomplete or when a story lacks closure (that is the sense of an ending) literary analysts often would consider this lack to indicate a literary failure. This attitude that there is no clear reference in such cases is countered by the recognition that if discourse derives from story and if discourse is a literary quality, then discourse is literature even if it does not require a story as its vehicle. In other words, some literature consists of a presented discourse that formally cuts short the story element of its presentation, formal literature.

Some clarification of the term "discourse" is necessary, since this term is widely used in different ways. First, there is a "narrow" construction where discourse refers to some particular idea; like the "moral" of a "fable," an idea derived from a literary presentation may be called its "discourse." Second, there is a much broader, more inclusive, sense where "discourse" refers to the whole dialogical, dialectical, ongoing discussion concerning literature itself. In this sense, literature is discourse, including both literary products and their commentaries (critical and theoretical). Difficulties in separating the more particular uses of this term from its more general uses suggest how formal categories tend not to be stable structures.

This study views "discourse" in several ways: one) as an idea derived from a story; two) as a term generally

applied as literature and its commentaries; three) as a less general term of form, discourse as genre, one distinguished from ideology (included in the more general sense) in order to show the relationships between genre and ideology. This study declines to view "narrative" and "discourse" as equivalent terms, though some have argued the contrary, in order to pursue "narrative" or "story" in a theoretically useful way to show how content elements promote ideas which are discursive in the narrower sense. Neither are "narrative" and "story" strictly equivalent terms; though both discursively designate "genres," "narrative" operates as a more general, theoretical term relating to structures, and "story" designates more particular content elements, such as plot and character, in particular works (see Chapter three for a discussion of "narrative" with respect to Metz). Again, there is some overlap between these usages, especially as they occur in the application of theory to particular works, but these terms are more useful with limitations that indicate certain elements within a range, operating in a relatively loose general structure, respecting significant variations.

Walter Benjamin sets up a version of this problem of story and discourse in his essay "The Storyteller": "it [the story] contains, openly or covertly, something useful . . . a moral . . . a proverb or maxim" (Illuminations 86); but "the novel gives evidence of the profound perplexity of the

living" (87). Benjamin's analysis distinguishes the story from the novel by the essential differences of their respective discourses in that the story produces discourse in the narrow sense while the novel produces discourse at a more general, formal level. This distinction has little to do with the fictional plot or content of a literary product which have come to be called "story" in the technical sense. To Benjamin, the referential function of the plot is not essential; for him literature is discourse, but a precise analysis cannot overlook the presentation of story because the discourse is grounded in such particulars: thus, story makes up the literary content, and, in isolation, still provides a rudimentary discourse, but the analysis of the literary product requires the examination of its discourse.

Besides Benjamin, Mikhail Bakhtin also focuses on discourse as the salient feature of analysis, and Bakhtin's temporal distinction between the discourse of the novel and that of the epic provides an elegant resolution of the problematic nature of these genres (see "Epic and Novel" 11-31). Obviously, both Benjamin's and Bakhtin's essays are themselves discursive, since the discourse about literature constitutes a literary discourse, and the essential unity of literary praxis is apparent from this perspective. The story element is not required in a formal literary discourse, just as certain forms of literary presentation do not require the story element, though, of course, in both

there is a material surface or content. Consequently, the analysis of context requires distinctions between surface and discourse, and the ultimate referential function resides in its appropriate discourse, designated as genre. The context of a product is its form or genre.

Contextual determinations derive from an examination of content, either as a presented story or as a presented discourse, contained in its surface, or from a further refinement of other possible forms (epic, novel, theory) implicated in the discourse of a literary product. Yet this designation of context as type or genre is somewhat abstract; a theoretical analysis of the referential function can go further toward materialization.

The polar duality of story and discourse delineates one aspect of context, but there is another aspect of context that deserves attention. If the referential function grounds signification in the world, which world is it? The cat in a dream is not the same as the cat on the corner, even though they may look alike. The text that constructs a dream world exhibits a marked difference from that which "reconstructs" the world of reality, and to admit that these worlds ultimately may be the same is not to deny that, ordinarily, the content, or textual surface, clearly demarcates them.

The choice of portraying a natural world or a surreal one entails differences of ideology and of representation,

and different forms of representation signal different discourses. Of course, these are discursive issues which relate to many aspects of this model, not the least of which is the previous discussion. The ideology of a text provides a contextual category critical to the analysis of a literary product. Many communication models suffer from the flaw that they do not consider ideology as a specific aspect of production, and, consequently, they imply that ideology is not significant, or, at least, this lacuna is sometimes construed this way. At other times, ideology may be construed as a prerequisite or "axiom" in communication: the utterance contains a perspective. Perhaps, historically, there have been times when a particular perspective was widely shared, but a dialectical concept of history presumes the opposite case. Moreover, although this dialectical concept of history is well established, it is not necessarily so widely received as to be itself presumptive. Much discourse masks ideological strategies, and this is shown by pervasive, dialectical, theoretical inquiries into the relationship between form and ideology.

Susan Lanser revises Jakobson's model with the addition of speech-act theory to modify his poetic function from "message" into "text" with both "ideological and material realities explicitly evoked by the text" and "what the text is 'about,' describes, symbolizes, etc" as embedded structures equivalent to the referential function; in other

words, as a hierarchical precedence within context such that "what the text is about" mediates between the text and its "ideological and material realities" (The Narrative Act 69-72). Lanser provides a clearer relation between representation and ideology, and this probably represents the chief virtue of her revision of Jakobson. The model presented above is less concerned with hierarchical relationships, however valid, than with the presentation of critical categories. Clearly, ideology and discourse are related as are the content elements of story and representation, but all these may not be simply collapsed into a single contextual category called "discourse" without due consideration of these relationships within referentiality and, further, of "context" to the rest of the entire model.

The purpose of a literary product can be interpreted in its historical context, but this context may only represent a dream of history. While ideology, to some extent, derives from purpose, just as discourse derives from story, purpose involves representation. At the content level, representation may overlap with story, but representation is not necessarily narrative, although narrative is necessarily based on representation. In his history of art, Art And Illusion, E. H. Gombrich asks:

> with the question of personal style we have reached the frontier of what is usually called "representation." For in these ultimate constituents the artist is said to express

> himself. But is there really such a sharp division between representation and expression? (366).

Gombrich conceives a close relationship between perception and representation, and his concern over the distinction between representation and expression corresponds to the differences between mimetic and oneiric texts (360-6). The natural text and the dream text pose an opposition that may be resolved at some point, but that point usually does not reside in their presentations.

The genre, or genres (this study will make clear their multiplicity), of fantastic literature provides an exemplary, theoretical site from which to consider the confrontation of mimetic and oneiric representational strategies. When Eric Rabkin proposed his analysis of fantastic literature and its relation to mimetic literature, he showed their differences by their referentiality either to real worlds or to fantastic ones. After all, in the real world one does not stumble over a cockatrice on the way down the stairs, but "the time machine that shuttles between our time and another makes clear the connectedness of the real world with fantastic worlds" (Fantastic Worlds 5).

Actually, the clarity of such a connection varies greatly; Rabkin's formula works better with respect to "SF"-genre types where presentations clearly demarcate differences between the worlds than those "blacker" genres where the referenced worlds approach an indeterminate

character. Kafka's The Metamorphosis, for example, confuses mimetic and oneiric worlds right at the outset of this story; the audience can never be sure that the transformed Gregor has actually awakened from the dream which precedes his transformation. Walter Benjamin and Stanley Corngold both discuss the varieties of interpretation and misprision attributed to critics of Kafka (there is a detailed discussion of the relationship between Kafka and the fantastic at the beginning of Chapter Four). Kafka's innovative juxtaposition of these opposed referential worlds contributes mightily to this widespread critical confusion.

Rabkin's analysis focuses on interrelationships between the author, the text, and the reader framed as psychological response, in which the text promotes audience expectations by referencing a "real" context and then reverses this context to an "imaginative" one, thwarting "realistic" audience expectations, and so on. This mechanism of "the reversal of the context by the text" is derived from a Freudian compensation as shown in Freud's essay "The Uncanny" (34). In The Metamorphosis, the story element of Gregor's awakening invites reader expectations of entering the "real" from the "dream," but, immediately, the audience finds Gregor strangely transformed; the audience has reentered the dream. Moreover, Gregor's family's attempts to "normalize" this situation, along with Gregor's own pathetic attempts to cope, suggest a "real," though uncanny,

context. However, the ongoing fact of this "impossible" transformation sustains the "dream" context. Todorov recognized these divergent contexts, but he could not reconcile them to his concept of the fantastic, because of their stark divergence (Brooke-Rose 66, again, see Chapter Four). To this extent, Rabkin's idea of "context reversals" does work with respect to The Metamorphosis, but with regard to the recognition of an oneiric context, one that Kafka immediately introduces, the divergence of referential worlds in this story collapses into a "black fantasy" with a strong dose of "realistic" elements. Kafka's work here is surely fantastic, but neither Rabkin nor Todorov can fully account for it. Rabkin's linear concept of "context reversal," a sequential unfolding, is upset by Kafka's continuous conflation of mimetic and oneiric representational fields.

Before Rabkin, Andre Breton in The Second Manifesto of Surrealism declares:

> those individuals who are drawn to Surrealism are especially interested in the Freudian concept which affects the greater part of their deep concerns as men -- the concern to create, to destroy artistically -- I mean the definition of the phenomenon known as 'sublimation' (160).

The congruence between Breton's creation as destruction and Rabkin's reversal of the context by the text recalls the notion of mimetic representation as wish fulfillment, expressed both in real presentations and in fantastic ones. Breton recognizes the importance of dream play in all representation. On the other hand, Rabkin proposes a

continuum approach to realism and to fantasy in literature: "even realistic narratives are minimally fantastic, while even thorough-going Fantasies are minimally realistic" (161). Rabkin suggests that there is some clear demarcation between "realism" and "fantasy," but Brooke-Rose in her essay "The evil ring: realism and the marvellous" shows that involvement of realistic devices in the fantastic can be much more than minimal (233-55). Again, representational converges do occur. Very often, writers do clearly demarcate representational worlds, but theories based on this relative frequency fall short in their evaluations of more complex fantasies. Todorov's genre of the pure fantastic is more successful in its willingness to explore the complexities of the fantastic.

Todorov's proposed genre of the pure fantastic provides a theoretical site from which to examine how contextual issues can complicate mimetic referentiality. Todorov's description of the genre of the pure fantastic depends upon a hesitation (produced by an ambiguous text) between natural and supernatural explanations of apparently supernatural events sustained to the end of the story (63, see Chapter four for some additional details of this definition). Here the appearance of the supernatural signals the possibility of the fantastic. Still, the supernatural is too restrictive a criterion for fantasy in general, especially in the twentieth century.

Colin Manlove has continued to defend a definition of fantasy based on "a substantial and irreducible element" of the supernatural, insisting that "theorists whose definitions differed from mine usually did so because they were applying them to quite different works, or contexts" (54, 53). Manlove believes that "no synthesis of these diverse views is possible" and that his form of fantasy "is the modern descendent of a once highly regarded type of literature: stories about the dealings of the supernatural with man," a largely traditionalist view (54, 64)[1.6] To some extent, this can be applied to Todorov because his genre is limited to a particular historical context in which elements of the marvellous are generally manifested as supernatural elements.

In more contemporary productions, the effect of the fantastic is more purely affective, consisting of a hesitation between world views so that interpretation is referenced to the dialectic between the real world as manifested in the text and the imaginative world that is playing off those realistic propositions. Often, as in surrealism, the imaginative world is referenced to the psychological domain where archetypes appear as images, the dream world. This dream world includes supernatural manifestations among other archetypes and psychic phenomena, and the interpretive problem becomes the determination of the textual context. Does the text (or its story) present

an objective mimesis or a subjective one? In Todorov's formulation, the hesitation produced by an ambiguous text prevents the determination of its discourse as being specifically grounded in either a natural or a supernatural presentation, so the discourse must be synthesized by reference to both of these possibilities, and some kind of unitary discourse may be resolved from the ambiguous structure. However, the structure is itself ambiguous, and the story, consequently, lacks closure. Due to this ambiguous representation, form is content; here the distinction between form and content loses its effectiveness in that the content directly represents formal concerns, content as discourse.

This gesture of the ambiguous text brings the reader into a contentious, discursive field because the illusion of a unitary discourse becomes unavailable due to the lack of a unitary surface or story. The hesitation produced by a text that is ambiguous with respect to its objective or subjective orientation participates in a similar double structure to the one that occurs in Todorov's ambiguous text which hesitates between a natural or a supernatural orientation. This conception of the fantastic marks a text as having an ambiguous surface which the reader must apply directly to its discourse, but this application is complicated by the indirection of its representation. The determination of the context remains inconclusive, but

complex. The participation of the reader in the exploration of this complex discourse becomes the mode of imaginative play in the text. Elsewhere, this study will refer to this process as "speculative discourse." The context becomes the representation of discursive issues presented in the text instead of a "real" or "natural," objective mimesis. Natural mimesis and speculative discourse present differences in ideological orientation roughly equivalent to those produced, respectively, by unitary and pluralistic discourses. In turn, these unitary and pluralistic forms are equivalent to Bakhtin's formulation of monological and dialogical discourses, which correspond, respectively, to the genres of epic and novel. Todorov's genre of the pure fantastic marks a literary-historical locus when writing became more overtly conscious, or self-referential, of a direct representation of imaginative forms. This expressionistic moment is realized in Andre Breton's First Manifesto of Surrealism, a generic congruence with the pure fantastic.

Todorov's genre of the pure fantastic appeared contemporaneously to the gothic novel (62). The marvelous or the supernatural component of the fantastic was an important element in gothicism, and Andre Breton cites The Monk as an admirable source for the marvelous which he equates with the fantastic (14-15). Breton notices also the dual structure of Monk Lewis' gothic novel, for it is fair

to say that The Monk is about half supernatural thriller and half romantic adventure, and he contrasts the natural elements of the embedded story to the supernatural elements which frame it. Breton feels the supernatural elements contribute the surreally beautiful quality to this writing, and, as in the pure fantastic, his exemplar possesses a double structure of naturalistic and fantastic elements (14). Because the supernatural element dominates the presentation in The Monk, this novel would not be considered as an example of Todorov's pure fantastic, but it shares the sense of a double structure that is found in Todorov's genre. The supernatural element projects a discourse well suited to the intensity of surreal portrayals, and Breton's choice of the gothic supernatural for its surreal beauty illustrates the transformation in literature of the supernatural into the psychological, to the discourse of archetypes, with which surrealism was largely concerned. The double structure of this novel along with Breton's humanization of its supernatural element suggest the complex effects of Todorov's fantastic texts:

> long before the author has freed his main characters from all temporal restraint, one feels them ready to act with unprecedented pride. This passion for eternity with which they are constantly stirred lends an unforgettable intensity to their torments, and to mine (15).

Breton's discussion explicitly invokes the author/reader relationship to which Breton has been led by the text of The Monk. This movement is largely equivalent to that of

Todorov's pure fantastic, and examples within in Todorov's genre show a refinement of this effect.

Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson" illustrates how the superimposition of natural and supernatural story structures forces the reader to seek in authorial discourse what is left unresolved in the story element. As in The Monk, temptation and damnation comprise the gothic terms of Poe's discourse in this story. Although Todorov considers Poe's tales more representative of the uncanny than of the fantastic, some of Poe's stories fit Todorov's fantastic; indeed, Christine Brooke-Rose has shown how Poe's story "The Black Cat" fits Todorov's description of this genre (65). Much of "William Wilson" is presented as realistic narrative, but supernatural elements occur. It is unusual that Poe uses devices related to the authorial level of the text to introduce and, at times, to sustain the supernatural, including quotes from other texts and stylistic parody. Poe's sense of the fantastic also calls for the inclusion of more purely psychic devices, like the interminable labyrinth of the school where the William Wilsons meet. Poe's approach to the supernatural, like Breton's, is often modern and psychological. In "William Wilson" Poe uses the supernatural element to bring the reader closer to the discourse of the tale by providing an alternative explanation for the story events and making the text an ambiguous one.[1.7]

Stephen Peithman believes that "William Wilson" "may have inspired Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray" (79), which itself presents a double structure. In Wilde's novel, the naive moral fable overlays a sophisticated aesthetic critique that, once recognized, unravels the moral presentation. Dorian's living portait becomes the consummate image of aesthetic representational mimesis, and the precision of this portrait utterly defines Dorian Gray. Thus, the limitation imposed upon art of direct representation (implying perception of the objective world) becomes exposed as a sensual prison which excludes imaginative play and which can only foster a vulgar morality based on sensual appearances.

Recall that Poe's narrator Wilson sums up William Wilson's aping of his dress and actions as "exquisite portraiture" (85).

In Poe's story, the naive moral surface of a man who executes his "personified conscience" overlays the realistic rendering of sequentially but reciprocally violent attitudes between the two Wilsons that inevitably result in a bloodbath. The final scenes from Poe and Wilde exhibit a marked congruency of identical figures, one dead and one whole, and the agency of the knife. Most of Wilde's novel proceeds as an aesthetic discourse closely related to the authorial level of the text, and Poe's influence may have extended to Wilde in this element also, through "William

Wilson's" complex examination of ethical impulses. The relation of these two stories suggests a movement towards a self-referential text in which ideology operates as an increasingly pluralistic discourse due to a representational conflation of mimetic (natural) and of oneiric (supernatural and psychic affect) elements. These texts constitute a "textual array," a concept fundamental to this study's definition of expressionism (Chapter Three).

The ambiguous effects of Poe, of Wilde, and of Breton's reading of Monk Lewis show the complexity of the contextual issue, for this authorial emphasis more focused on writing itself than on the particulars of literary representation recontextualizes the story. This is accomplished through a more complex field of representation, one which includes both mimetic and oneiric forms. Also, the issue of genre is determined by this contextual referentiality which transforms an author's discourse. Genre may clearly be viewed as an aspect of the story, but, at times, what appears to be a story may be a discourse. Authors may take elements of gothic moral fables and incorporate them into complex ethical and/or aesthetic discourses. Such crucial transformations show the importance of context in the process of interpretation; where context is taken as mere referentiality, interpretation focuses more on the story.

The function of context with its related issues of discourse, genre, ideology, and representation shows how

crucial these rhetorical concepts have become in contemporary theoretical approaches. The interrelatedness of these concepts indicates their tenuous character. These contextual concepts are also closely related to the poetic, phatic, and metalinguistic functions: discourse and interpretation (poetic), ideologies and modes of production (phatic), and representation and codes (metalinguistic). Moreover, the relations between author and audience constitute a context (emotive and conative). Of course, intensive probing into the other functions could provoke a similar complexity, but their treatment here necessarily will be limited to naturalistic and expressionistic types.

Message

The poetic function or "text" has been the subject of many theoretical strategies, particularly deconstructive approaches which have provided volumes of discourse on qualities of textuality, but this study will focus on two general aspects: the physical text itself and textual interpretation. These qualities inhere in the idea of message so that a message presents a surface that contains one or more interpretations of the meaning(s) associated with that surface. An ordinary message probably contains more "signifieds" than "signifiers."

The text is irreducibly material, and this focus tended to concretize the text as a material structure, a thing of apparently independent status that could support a unitary ideology: the material signifier may lend substance to the abstract signified. Brooke-Rose mentions the Prague school's concern with the meaning of text, and this concern led to an exploration of the phatic function with its presentation of signifiers in its interpretive quest (25). Postmodernism often alters signifiers which both alters signifieds and calls attention to inherent abstractions in the constitution of the sign itself.

The material quality of the text cannot overrule its own intimate connection with interpretation, both of authorial creation as an interpretive process and of audience interpretation. However, once made, the material quality of the text provides the ultimate source of authenticity and, thus, grounds the evidence of literary analysis. This material, textual surface provides content as well as generic qualities, and a generic sorting based on presented "material images" of the text is useful in determining the discourse a text provides (Chapter three).

Interpretation as an aspect of textuality possesses a pluralistic quality, a multiplicity of readings that arise from the text's material presence. This is paradoxical in that the unitary material presence of text may lead to a corresponding unitary interpretation, and this idea

corresponds to the desire for a direct correspondence between language and reality. Nevertheless, language possesses an inherent ambiguity, and this ambiguity provides multiple readings which are grounded in the material surface of any text. This is the textual image, containing both the image of its transmission and an image of itself as a source of pluralistic meanings. The practice of criticism has demonstrated the plurality of readings available from any text, and the desire for direct correspondence engenders competition among these readings for the "best" one. Theoretical practice considers all readings justified by the material text and weighs these with respect to a broader discourse based on these interpretations. In this way, the direction of inquiry may more soundly seek a unitary resolution, but there is no guarantee that a unitary discourse can be ascribed to any particular text, though a theoretical, systemic approach more ably covers the discursive field. Ultimately, text provides both material surface and pluralistic interpretation without determining a unitary resolution.

Addresser/Addressee

The relations of production of text bear crucially upon interpretation, and this is why the subjective and conative functions stand in a horizontal relation to the poetic

function in Jakobson's model. The acts of production and of reception affect both the material quality of the text and its interpretations. Brooke-Rose cites J. R. Searle's emphasis that "even so much as to identify a text as a novel, a poem, or even as a text is already to make a claim about an author's intention" (27). However, such basic claims of intentionality (subjective function) or, correspondently, of affect (conative function) cannot justify elaborate descriptions of an author's intention based on scraps of biographical knowledge, even autobiographical statements (some authors lie) or, on the other hand, doctrinaire elaborations of how a reader must view a text. The material text provides evidence for intention and affect, and critics should fear to tread beyond this evidential base.

Wayne Booth proposed the concepts of implied author and implied reader as a way of describing relations of production and reception based upon any particular text without illogically drawing in particular writers or readers (29). Here symmetrical conventions for the narrator and the narratee account for relations of the narrative surface in the text (equivalent to "voice" in the revised model). All these particularizations of production relations are summarized by Seymour Chatman in Story and Discourse (151). His diagram has been adapted for the expanded model above: note that implied author, implied reader, narrator, and

narratee are considered aspects of the text itself. To this extent, Jakobson's subjective and conative functions per se are not being revised so much as elaborated in a revision of the poetic function.

However logically distanced from the text the actual author and reader are, their place in the rhetorical process possesses obvious significance as designated relations of production, and they can be discussed meaningfully when relations of production change. Benjamin's essay "The Author as Producer" explores relations of production with respect to literary quality, and his conclusion that "a work that exhibits the correct [political] tendency must of necessity have every other [literary] quality" shows how the text remains the evidential basis for a discussion of developments in authorial intention and receptive affect (Reflections 221). Benjamin elaborates his proposed conclusion as a relation of production:

> a political tendency is the necessary, never the sufficient condition of the organizing function of a work. This further requires a directing, instructing stance on the part of the writer. And today this is to be demanded more than ever before. An author who teaches writers nothing, teaches no one. What matters, therefore, is the exemplary character of production, which is able first to induce other producers to produce, and second to put an improved apparatus at their disposal. And this apparatus is better the more consumers it is able to turn into producers -- that is, readers or spectators into collaborators. We already possess such an example, to which, however, I can only allude here. It is Brecht's epic theatre (233).

Clearly, Benjamin's remarks include ideological context and the condition of the finished text as major factors in his

proposed dialectical description of the relations of production, but his focus on the author's intention to cause the reader to write and, correspondingly, for the reader to write beyond what he has read shows a significant change in the relations of production that is meaningfully discussed in terms of authorial intention and of reader reception. This change possesses crucial importance in the elucidation of the expressionist type of discourse to which this study aspires.

Contact

Theory has shown how differences in the means of aesthetic production restructure the aesthetic experience and redefine aesthetic standards. The works of Walter Benjamin, Walter Ong, and Marshall McLuhan have demonstrated how technological changes impact on aesthetics, and their conclusions have been supported by theorists who have appraised literary qualities from the stylistic and generic perspectives, specifically Erich Auerbach and Mikhail Bakhtin. Also, Christian Metz's more recent work has explored the relations of production in cinema to bring them to bear more strongly on the representation of the cinematic sign.[1.8] Chapter Three of this study considers phatic transformations in detail.

At this point, the major areas of phatic transformation include the shift from oral to written presentation, the progression from writing to print, and the shift from print to cinema with the resultant aggregation of forms of cultural presentation. This may be viewed as a shift from aural to visual dominance and three stages of visual representation (writing, print, cinema). In this progression, the signifier passes from the verbal form to the image form, and words and images require different processes of signification; consequently, different systems of aesthetic elaboration develop for each. The shifts from writing to print to cinema provide nuances for an appreciation of the historical dialectic of modernism, an intensive area of contemporary literary research; this is the subject of Chapter two. From this perspective, one can see that the structuralist focus on signifier and signified relations tends to emphasize a linear verbality, derived from writing and print, that fails to account for the differences brought about by image representation, such that images are assumed to be built out of words and signify in much the same way as words, that is, by some form of direct correspondence either in a one-to-one mapping or a multiple mapping of three- or four-to-one as in symbolic and hermeneutic approaches.

In Air and Dreams, Gaston Bachelard insists that "the literary image must be enriched with a new oneirism" (249).

Words and images are related in that images are a source of verbal descriptions which, in turn, generate interpretations. This is a necessarily pluralistic process: one strives to describe the dream image or the film image, but variant descriptions are still available which are also appropriate to the source image. Each description, each message, generates different interpretations. One "reads" the image in a theoretical, systemic way by considering and comparing descriptive and interpretive variations of the source image; in this way, one comes to appreciate the value of a particular image, and one comes to recognize how images are inherently values, not just "pictures" of an objective reality.

Code

This discussion of theoretical revision of Jakobson's functions will now be completed by considering the metalinguistic function and the changes wrought in cultural codes by image representation. Allegory is often considered as a specific literary technique in which elements of a story are referenced to specific concepts outside the story:

> when the events of a narrative obviously and continuously refer to another simultaneous structure of events or ideas, whether historical events, moral or philosophical ideas, or natural phenomena" (Preminger 12).

Nevertheless, the way in which allegory works as a specific literary technique suggests its usefulness as a trope for linguistic and literary referentiality in general. Naturalist literary referentiality proposes to correspond to the real, natural world either in a one-to-one fashion (as in a "brick") or in a symbolic mode where a word is given multiple meanings and, often, one of these meanings brings in an inclusive sublime (the suggestion of transcendence of linguistic meaning itself; this is considered at more length in Chapters Two and Three).

Simple, natural referentiality (the "brick" type) can be designated as Allegory I in which the illusion is presented of a word corresponding to some natural referent. The illusory quality of the reference comes about because referentiality is accomplished through an abstraction, the "signified," which cannot correspond to the natural object in a specific way, but which proposes a general abstraction that is connected to a specific word or "signifier" ("brick" implies "all bricks"). Although this form of referentiality is enormously practical, it accomplishes its ends by concealing its abstract component, and few wonder that every word invokes some kind of sublime justification for its position in the verbal order. Further, signifier play ruptures the connection between signifier, signified, and referent (what is "brick*"?) so that each word must be preserved in a conventionalized form or all meaning is at

risk, if not lost altogether. Nonetheless, naturalistic discourse proceeds by ignoring the concealed abstraction and works well, up to a point.

This crisis in linguistic referentiality, where naturalism breaks down, can be seen in the development of the natural sciences, particularly quantum mechanics. Recall, for example, the "cloud" model of the atom which is not a cloud but which is something like a cloud. The need for concision in such descriptions drives these scientists to consider the abstractions contained in a word, to explore the signified's abstraction. There is a great deal of data available to quantum mechanics, so much that linear approaches to analysis cannot cope with it all. The problem of physical science has become the problem of language itself. Thus, naturalism appears too unsophisticated to present meaning in its own practical domain, that of the natural world. In quantum mechanics verbal representation reaches its own limit, appearing unable to describe complex phenomena, except by analogy.

Symbolic or hermeneutic representation ascribes several meanings or levels of meaning to a single word; this is Allegory II. Coleridge's definition of a symbol fused traditional hermeneutic interpretation into symbolic representation. This form of naturalism is more complex in that a single word conveys several specific meanings, but the problem of the sublime is not resolved here; instead, it

is given its own level of meaning, often referred to as the "anagogic." This form of allegory has in common with the first form that a single word conveys meaning, but in the second form several meanings are proposed simultaneously while the first form proposes a unitary meaning for each word. Naturalistic representation is served by symbolism in that symbolism invokes the complexity of the natural world, but, often, symbols are special cases where a word can be shown to operate on several levels, and the problem of the abstract component remains. Nevertheless, the idea of a symbol brings the abstract component into prominence by ascribing a level of signification to it, rather than concealing it as in allegory I ("brick" can also be a symbol). Symbol is an appropriate word to describe words in general, although such a formulation is a bit inconsistent in that all words are not generally considered to participate in fully symbolic signification.

Both these forms of verbal allegory (I and II) function through a kind of mapping: one word connects to one referent or one word connects to several referents such that each form of allegory provides a model or metaphor for the phenomenon of meaning in the natural world. However, the connection between a word and its referent is problematized as the connection between the abstract signified and the material world; on the other hand, the signifier is a part of the material world, mute but for the abstractions

invested in it. This distance is inherent to language. The natural world itself has changed in the way that it is represented: are not dreams part of the natural world? Does not quantum mechanics explain that the natural world is mostly empty?

One can perceive the need for language to work better, but few solutions have been proposed. Considering forms of allegory as phases of allegorical referentiality provides ways to compare systems of signification with their related forms of production and to observe changes within those systems. The oral contact form works congruently with the unitary signification of allegory I, and writing typifies the symbolic phase, allegory II, as with the preeminently hermeneutic text The Bible. Print and cinema process the image of text and the text of image respectively, suggesting a phase of allegory based on the signification of image systems. Further, this image of a text and this text made up of images suggest stages in the development of image processing systems to render meaning. Another allegorical phase, allegory III, based upon image presentation and respecting differences between the image of text and the text of image coheres with the representation of image as a phatic form, the image contact, typified by cinema montage.

Peter Burger describes a new form of allegorical code in Theory of the Avant-Garde based on Benjamin's proposal from The Origin of German Tragic Drama in which "from a

production-aesthetic point of view . . . elements of Benjamin's concept of allegory accord with what may be understood by 'montage'" (70). These elements involve the isolation of materials from traditional contexts and their recombination to create meaning; isolation is made possible by the mechanical reproduction of art into an image of itself, described by Benjamin in his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Benjamin refused to treat new media as mere embellishments, choosing instead to investigate their transformational power. The idea of the material image as a vehicle for literary signification derives both from the use of the reproduced image as literary material and from this image's availability in the material text. The essential quality of textuality becomes its presentation through material images; the material image both mediates and conveys literary discourse.

Archetypal psychology has, from an idealist perspective, arrived at similar conclusions to those which Benjamin derived from his materialist approach, especially with regard to the signification of the image. Benjamin discusses the withering of the aura and the "expressionist" equality of images; these are echoed by James Hillman in one of his essays in Facing the Gods: "[n]ecessity has no image because it works in each and every image . . . the archetype is wholly immanent in the image itself" (10). For Hillman, "the image is a self-limiting multiple relationship of

meanings, moods, historical events, quantitative details, and expressive possibilities. As its referent is imaginal, it always retains a virtuality beyond its actuality," and the arts "provide complicated disciplines that can actualize the complex virtuality of the image" (9-10). Hillman addresses representation as a form of knowledge:

> if archetypal images are the fundamentals of fantasy, they are the means by which the world is imagined, and therefore they are the modes by which all knowledge, all experiences whatsoever become possible" (12).

If the natural world is only a site of an ultimate psychic reality, it remains a place inhabitable by images, for the space in which they occur, our personal space, is traceable to a locus within the natural world.

All this seems rather abstract, but an exemplary case makes this dynamic clearer. Unlike simple allegory, where one thought directly corresponds to one other, the material image corresponds to several others, to descriptions and interpretations derived from a source image, each one of which is specific and different, but still sufficiently alike to be designated by a particular image, even though this image possesses its own specifity. The speculative virtuality is this set of corresponding systems of ideas or thoughts which resonate to the presented image, as well as those which associate to less directly related fields (a factor of the personal intuition of the subject). Thus, an explicitly sexual image might suggest aspects of

achitectural design, or vice versa, as in the Eiffel Tower. This combination of virtual allegorical systems with other associated images constitutes the signifying complex of the material image. In this way, the idea of an allegory that signifies as "other" is recognized as one that signifies other allegories and associations beyond either simple or symbolic allegorical correspondences. It is easy to see how the material image may include both simple and symbolic allegories, but the material image is not restricted to representing only simple or symbolic allegories or both.

Hillman has suggested a possible site for signification in Archetypal Psychology that makes use of the term "soul" which is characterized by a metaphorical signification: "the metaphorical mode of soul is 'elusive, allusive, illusive'. . . undermining the very definition of consciousness as intentionality and its history as development," and "[t]he relation of soul to death . . . is thus a function of the psyche's metaphorical activity" (21). It would seem that this formulation closely approximates Benjamin's formulation of allegorical signification, including even "the activity of the allegorist as the expression of melancholy" (Burger 69). Hillman's formulation of the image also corresponded to levels of discourse: it is elusive with respect to the discourse derived from story; it is illusive with respect to the

discourse of form; it is allusive with respect to the discourse of ideology.

The material image differs from metaphor in the verbal or symbolic sense, but it operates similarly to Hillman's use of metaphor. Hillman borrows Langer's term "fecund" which furthers and deepens elaboration of the image (8), for the image is a discursive form that generates elaborate description. Further, the material image illumines the chain of intertextual relations between the texts of those authors who practice this strategic discourse as an aesthetic integration, and it can move easily between verbal and visual media. On its surface, the material image may be deceptive, causing a confusion with naturalist images which are a story-related subset of material images. Hillman maintains that "archetypal psychology recognizes that psychic reality is inextricably involved with rhetoric"; the "value" of the image is recovered through rhetoric (13).

This virtual complex of the material image is an intuitive proto-knowledge which is distilled by rhetoric into specific understanding; whether the potential knowledge of intuition (its ideal form) is more truly "knowledge" than its specified elaboration (its material form) is moot, but the recognition of both forms as contributory to understanding is crucial. Shelley's understanding of the nature of poetry as "'the expression of the imagination'," an imaginative synthesis which includes intuition, is basic

to expressionist theories of poetry ("the very image of life expressed in its eternal form" and "it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness" Defence 480, 485-86). Expressionist theories reached an acme of development with Benedetto Croce who concluded that poetic expression represented an intuition as an image (Preminger 266-67). From this perspective, it is a short step from expression to expressionism (this is discussed in more detail in Chapter two, "Expressionism").

The material image generates the virtual complex, an intuitive construct which provides a field from which to draw a discourse, a context for understanding. Rather than continue to designate meaning by the term "knowledge," it may be helpful to consider this image complex as the intuitive aesthetic object and the text as the material aesthetic object which presents, through rhetoric, the mediating image which conveys this discourse. To this extent, the artist and the theorist may use similar means to attain their ends, and the use of a category like "fiction" does not adequately convey this sense of convergence in which a set of representations substantiates textual presentation. Further elaboration of expressionism, textual arrays, and specific texts are contained in Chapters two and three.

The consideration of the way in which the material image impacts upon code can be extended from the elaboration

of the signifying process to the generation of generic systems based upon the material image. If all knowledge projects some form of fantasy, as Hillman says, the material image can help distinguish between forms of fantasy. Here is another dualism, a temporal one. Time is historical, specific, natural; time is also surreal, mythological, unreal. Each view of time presents an appropriate form of imagery, and these forms are generally distinguishable. Bakhtin demonstrated the utility of a temporal discourse as a means to distinguish genre. Any projected image occurs in some spatial-temporal continuum, and, for heuristic purposes, one can envision differentiated continuums in which differentiated images occur. Mundane images derive from a natural and historical universe while dream images signify the psychic cosmos. The realm of the marvelous portrays flying horses and other oneiric, incongruous images of the unreal, but the natural, historical projection is typified by a train. These distinct image fields convey distinct discourses with appropriate rules for interpretation of each; these represent two basic forms of fantasy, the pedestrian and the magical. These forms coexist in the culture, but each is separate and distinct. Todorov's theory of the pure fantastic makes use of these distinct types of images to distinguish the marvelous from the uncanny, the dual elements which make up the pure fantastic. Todorov examines the supernatural image in order

to consign it to the natural world, the world of the marvelous, or both.

In a critical study of Sade's work, Angela Carter concludes "his characters represent moral absolutes in a world where no moral absolutes exist." She finds that against the historical relativism of the world presented in Sade in which "good and evil are not the same thing at all times and in all places" Sadean "psychology relates his fiction directly to the black and white ethical world of fairy tale and fable" (The Sadean Woman 82). For Carter, the character provides an image grounded in fantasy, one that clashes with the more purely historical world of the setting in Sade's novels. Unlike Todorov, who considers the convergence of real and unreal in the pure fantastic, Carter finds a destructive tension in the cohabitation of real and unreal in Sade. For both Todorov and Carter, the recognition of real and unreal images is crucially important in the determination of literary value. These real and unreal fields are types of representation with specific approaches to interpretation of each; one reads them differently to determine the discourse which each conveys. The separation and convergence of these image fields help to establish generic qualities based on the presentation of the material image as real or unreal.

Temporal presentation of these images also affects interpretation, as Bakhtin has shown, and this is further

related to primary forms of production (oral, written, printed, cinematic). The discourses of the past and of the present function differently, altering the relations of production in their presentations. When the temporal discourse of the image is compared with its reality type, a generic pattern results that allows for classification of literature based on the presentation of the material image (see Chapter three, "The Image-Genre Grid.") This image continuum presents another theoretical dualism which, along with the dualist approach to allegorical signification, problematizes Jakobson's metalinguistic function.

Having arrived at the end of this examination of theoretical issues and Jakobson's functional theory of rhetoric, one can conclude that Jakobson's identification of specific areas of discourse in his model has been enormously helpful as a ground for theoretical investigation. Theoretical progress has elaborated his functions in ways that suggest further revision of these functions. One can see that both the code and the context tend to merge into a variety of subtextual issues, and these all ensue quickly upon one's reception of the presented product, or text. Also, relations of production merge when artists produce for other artists, as Benjamin has noted. All this suggests a dualist reduction in rhetorical studies which could focus on the textual product with its related subtexts and on the relations of production. However, such a reduction is less

the fulfillment of theoretical analysis than is the discovery of salient features for description, and Jakobson provided a helpful means to envision rhetorical dynamics. Theoretical practice has elaborated significant areas of discourse and recognized their simultaneity in cultural experience, their synchronicity. This study would simplify without compromising this theoretical progress into cultural studies which might, in turn, provide a basis for a reconceptualization of cultural products and issues.

The Precession of Modernisms

The precession of modernisms is a concept that allows for the recognition of a type of modernism which is associated with each form of production (oral, written, printed, and cinematic) and which recognizes in contemporary culture an aggregate of such forms. Literary history shows how different ages past have maintained their own sense of the modern and how subsequent conceptions overthrew previous ones.[1.9] The rest of Part One and Part Two of this study illustrate this phenomenon in detail.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERARY BACKGROUNDS

Naturalism and Expressionism

Naturalism

Throughout this study, the term "naturalism" designates a traditional, aesthetic mimesis which asserts a faith in the referential function as linguistically accurate and which subsumes aesthetic production within a monolithic tradition. Naturalism is often a source for certain philosphical constructs as in "natural" knowledge or "natural" law in which the content of such terms is exactly what their authors suggest, but this is somehow augmented by the brute silence of natural "reality" (the referential field) taken by these authors as the silence of assent to their constructions.

The attempt to pluralize naturalism into various forms has some advantages. These advantages are dramatically demonstrated by Auerbach in Mimesis where they show how significant differences in representations entail different discourses. Auerbach's method is followed by Preminger in his essay on "nature" (551-6). However, a point of diminishing returns is reached when all artistic production is considered as one form or other of "mimetic"

representation. In this way, a totalizing discourse seeks to define a plurality of aesthetic movements, many of which define themselves as opposed to traditional mimesis, within a common mimetic endeavor.

This study takes the attitude that a more accurate typology recognizes that differences in representation are representative of dialectically opposed forms of discourse. Such a typology accounts for radically different styles of literary and cinematic production by considering their positions with respect to discourse. Such a typology is fully elaborated in Chapter Three (see the "Image-Genre Grid"), and a major advantage of this typology is that it allows for a recognition of pluralism in aesthetic production and, consequently, discourse. In the first chapter, relative forms of "modernism" were elaborated with respect to dominant technologies of aesthetic production, considering "postmodern" as an appropriate response by an image-based aesthetic technology to a "modern" attitude based on a linear, verbal technology (print). Of course, both these forms are relatively modern to other forms, so a focus for describing these relative differences is sought in different forms of representation, considered here as naturalistic and expressionistic, respectively. The historical approach of this chapter will focus on the development of expressionism and on the cultural dialectic that expressionism illuminated.

The purpose for this discussion of "the image of text" is to show how writers gradually came to realize this expressionistic/naturalistic dialectic in their texts. In many of these writers, a representation based on mimetic naturalism came to be replaced by an increasingly explicit concern with the production of images and metatext, more direct forms of discourse. Gestures of mixing styles or genres in specific works indicate the movement away from a mimetic formula, in which a verbal style presents information in a linear fashion, and a movement toward the recognition of the text as an image of itself, an image capable of containing and of comparing various styles or genres within itself. This metatextual image does not merely provoke discourse, but it is itself a form of discourse which overrides facile distinctions between "fact" and "fiction," categories based on mimetic forms.

Traditionally, "naturalism" takes many forms, and more modern forms of naturalism exhibit expressionistic qualities. Preminger notes that for some "naturalism" is equivalent to "romanticism" (550). Indeed, the romantic period is when the dialectical rift between naturalism and expressionism becomes an explicitly self-referential concern, particularly with respect to the "gothic." Mary Shelley's Frankenstein portrays the monster acquainting himself with Milton, and Byron's "Dedication" to Don Juan ridicules forms of conventional, contemporary poetry.

Dialectical forms of "modernism" emerged with respect to these variant romantic trends, as extensions of them.

Preminger's discussion of Zola's "naturalism" as deterministically based on a rigorous objective/subjective dichotomy extends classic naturalism's concern with an imitative mimesis. "Underlying" this, Preminger explains, is "a humanitarian desire to change the existing social conditions" (551). A more emphatic call for change is characteristic of expressionism, but the discourse of Zola's naturalism, while it may wish for better conditions, is presented in an aesthetic form allied with the creation of oppressive conditions, namely, an elitist determination which emphasizes production and profit and which considers the social sphere as an exploitable raw material, the same attitude taken toward "nature" in general. A parallel case to Zola occurs in American literature in Crane's The Red Badge of Courage; this graphic depiction of war is less a statement against war, than it is an observation of the state of war. While one reader may question war's necessity, another may find it ennobling. Crane's novel is a far cry from Heller's Catch-22 or Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow, although it is quite likely that both these authors read Crane's novel with interest. This sort of literary naturalism is related to impressionistic painting which developed a new form of "contact," but which vitiated this form by portraying "nature" images or idyllic middle-class

scenes, again, art essentially allied with the status quo as a naturalistic reification (see Burger 35-54).

A more postmodern form of naturalism has come to be associated with Robbe-Grillet in that his works tend towards an undecidability or indeterminism by problematizing the objective/subjective polarity. His texts produce images which the reader must interpret along the way, thereby participating in the development of discourse as a part of the act of reading, rather than deferring such interpretation until the story has run its course. As a rule, conventional naturalism denies subjectivity as a valid source of representation, and Auerbach bucks this trend by asserting the mimetic value of the styles of Joyce and Woolf (see "The Brown Stocking").

There are some areas of overlap, however, where naturalism grants some value to subjectivity. One occurs with regard to the representation of "true" dreams (see Chapter Three). Another occurs with respect to the use of the supernatural in gothic writing, where the supernatural is interrogated to determine if it is genuine or a form of subjectivity: if it is discovered to be subjective, such subjectivity is "natural" in that it is illusory. On the other hand, the genuine supernatural supports institutional discourses allied with naturalism, literally as a super-naturalism, allied with the natural argument for the existence of God. Expressionistic, fantastic forms contest

this traditional supernaturalism with the presentation of secular forms of unreality, largely based on dreams.

Yet another form of valid subjectivity for naturalism is associated with "realism" in that subjectivity is considered a real illusion (this problem is discussed with respect to Metz in chapter three). Also, realistic portrayal tends to be conventionalized so that ultra-realistic devices which coincide with subjective views paradoxically take on an air of unreality due to their difference from conventional realism. This is the case with Welles' expressionistic use of deep focus in cinema (see chapter four). Conversely, the deep focus lens, which approximates human vision, would be prized as a naturalistic signifier if this use accorded with realistic conventions. A similar problem emerges with Marker's use of still photographs to construct a film (see Chapter Three). These photographs are realistic, but they are unreal in a cinematic context which conventionalizes realism as represented <u>motion</u>, and within this unreality such photographs are indistinguishable from subjective impressions. Paradoxically, realism is not always indicative of a naturalistic discourse, particularly in film, but it also often is an indicator of naturalism, and in such a naturalistic context subjectivity may be granted some validity. Largely, naturalism defines itself by a representation of an objective field, and subjectivity is

consigned to an inconsequential, even decadent, area of only marginal concern to the naturalist. Dialectically, subjectivity is a crucial concern in expressionism.

Expressionism

In general, the term "expressionism" has referred to deviations from naturalistic or realistic presentation in modernist works. Twentieth-century techniques, such as stream-of-consciousness, fragmentation, surreal abstraction, and signifier play present distinctively marked variations immediately apparent in modern texts. Expressionistic techniques proclaimed their own differences from those of naturalistic mimesis. This quality of self-proclamation helps show the development of expressionism from an expressionist aesthetic orientation. By making art more rhetorical in principle and in practice and by proclaiming qualities readily identifiable with those of expressionist sources, expressionistic artists emphasized the subjective dimension in representation.

Aesthetic history from the latter nineteenth- through the mid-twentieth centuries, a period of about a hundred years, has been marked by controversial, "avant" approaches to aesthetic production which, while they are distinct from each other, use similar techniques to achieve their self-proclaimed effects. Abstract expressionism, dadaism,

surrealism, futurism, activism, cubism, and expressionism all used bold techniques in complex presentations, but all also differed ideologically. Precedent movements (decadents, aesthetes) also proclaimed their ideological differences from naturalism, but the early twentieth-century groups expressed ideological differences with naturalism and with other movements; sometimes these others might be viewed as "naturalized" or "reified."

Paul Siegal in his introduction to Trotsky's aesthetics describes the ideological variations of futurism:

> the Bolsheviks, far from seeking to set aside the past, had their own revolutionary tradition, which was foreign to the futurists, but the internal dynamics of the futurists' rebellion against old values propelled them to the new social order. In Italy, on the other hand, the futurists were attracted by the pseudorevolution of fascism . . . the diverse directions taken by futurism illustrates, as does, for instance, the existence of the reactionary romanticism of Scott and the radical romanticism of Shelley, that a literary school is neither a mechanical contrivance constructed by a social class nor an independent entity immune to the changes in the intellectual and emotional environment created by changes in economic structure (Trotsky 12).

Cultural expressionism demonstrated its rhetorical emphasis through dialectical movements. These movements often saw themselves as anti-movements with respect to other movements, but the techniques which these movements have in common demonstrate their relatedness, and the rhetoric which they use identifies them as commonly concerned with similar issues as were pre-romantic and romantic movements. Trotsky describes this aesthetic dialectic:

> it [bourgeois society] was able to control and assimilate every "rebel" movement in art and raise it to the level of official "recognition." But each time this "recognition" betokened, when all is said and done, the approach of trouble. It was then that from the left wing of the academic school or below it -- i.e., from the ranks of a new generation of bohemian artists -- a fresher revolt would surge up to attain in its turn, after a decent interval, the steps of the academy. Through these stages passed classicism, romanticism, realism, naturalism, symbolism, impressionism, cubism, futurism. . . . Nevertheless, the union of art and the bourgeoisie remained stable. . . . The artistic schools of the last few decades -- cubism, futurism, dadaism, surrealism -- follow each other without reaching a complete development (105).

By not "reaching a complete development" Trotsky suggests that these more recent movements have not completed this process of reification.

Today the status of these movements argues against a complete reification in that their self-referential antagonism towards tradition still survives in some works, while others demonstrate a cooption. Surreal textual production, for example, maintains an integrity in Ishmael Reed's Mumbo Jumbo (1972), even as it has been coopted in advertising, and Dali's turn to fascism indicates a kind of self-reification. On the other hand, impressionist art generally commands art-auction prices of over a million dollars per piece, an indication of a thoroughly reified form. Expressionistic film practice has also been put to various ideological uses, sometimes in spite of the directors. Orson Welles' The Magnificent Ambersons and

Touch of Evil were both recut by the studio before being exhibited to large audiences (see Welles' interview).

The self-referential quality of expressionistic production allows, at least, a potential to escape reification, but individual works must be considered to determine the actual extent of reification or lack of it, a controversial process. The romantic movements mentioned by Siegal (above) also emphasized their dialectical differences from received tradition, and these movements have been shown to be the more direct influence on modernist forms. From this perspective, one may see the evolution of the dialectical character of the expressionistic movement. The essence of modern expressionism combines dialectically political engagement with its presentation of image. The forms of modern expressionism are various, as are its styles, and the postmodern age of the late twentieth century has been marked by a progression of these various styles and by an emphasis on ideological dialectics. Common techniques are often used to serve divergent ideological interests, and the issue of ideology has itself become even more prominent than it was in early twentieth century modernism. Here a brief discussion of expressionism as a quality of twentieth-century modernism will be helpful.

Poetic expression, the rhetorical elocutio, is seen by Preminger as progressing through literary history and being reformulated by major figures including Cicero, Coleridge,

and Pater, but reaching its most comprehensive description in Croce (266). Croce's emphases upon intuition and image refined the previous formulations which had focused on "thought" or "emotion" in this subjectively oriented approach to poetics. To Croce should be added developments by Gaston Bachelard and James Hillman (Hillman is discussed throughout this study). Bachelard insists that "one must be receptive, receptive to the image at the moment it appears" (1149). Further, Bachelard forsakes any objectification of the poetic image:

> I tried to consider images without attempting personal interpretation. Little by little, this method, which has in its favor scientific prudence, seemed to me to be an insufficient basis on which to found a metaphysics of the imagination (1150).

Bachelard anticipates Hillman through the former's formulation of "a phenomenology of the soul" with an emphasis on "the dreaming consciousness" (Chapter Three and Part Two of this study develop the concept of a literature of dreams). As Hillman does, Bachelard witnesses the metatextual quality of the image: "the poetic image has an entity and a dynamism of its own; it is referable to a direct ontology" (1149). In Jakobson's terms, one might say the image, according to Bachelard, does not so much refer one to a context (reference) as it constitutes a code, and in this role it generates its own context, or, at least, the image is itself the point of overlap between context and code.

There are several important poets who have anticipated these later developments of poetic expression. Recall Shelley's concern with intuition in his poetics, an anticipation of Croce. Also, for Oscar Wilde "thought and language are to the artist instruments of an art" (the preface to Dorian Gray 17); this coheres with the subjective and rhetorical orientation in poetic expression. The Victorian Pre-Raphaelite movement refined the presentation of poetic images anticipating the modernist preoccupation with starkly visual poetry as well as contributing a visual praxis to the field of poetic expression. Blake's impact upon poetic presentation was contemporary to that of these painter-poets, and his work calls attention to the quality of self-consciousness emphasized by poetic expressionists in their dialectical confrontation with traditional forms of objective mimesis.

In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Blake explains that he will expunge "the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul . . . by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives . . . melting apparent surfaces away and displaying the infinite which was hid" (39). His self-referential poetic image emphasizes the reliance on the sublime common in Romantic poetry, but it also presents an artistic method which provides a context for the projection of the sublime. Similarly, his "Printing house in Hell" describes reality as a result of aesthetic production; the

real becomes equated with the image of a library (40). Blake's illuminated manuscripts join visual images with poetic images and crystalize the concern with visual presentation of texts which had broadly influenced eighteenth-century textual production.

Expressionistic practice recognizes the importance of image in the co-presentation of content and context. In other words, the context of art is emphasized as well as the content. This rhetorical orientation which provides a dialectical stance vis-a-vis its content describes a tendency throughout literary history toward expressionism (see below, "discourse and intertextuality"). Theories of poetic expression systematized this rhetorical tendency, and, eventually, Croce's elaboration of aesthetic metatext as intuition and image provided a precise formulation for the co-presentation of content and context as "an a priori synthesis" (Preminger). Early modern expressionistic praxis calls attention to its own alignment with theories of poetic expression along with its refinement of expressionistic techniques.

The emergence of expressionism affected painting, drama, poetry, and the novel, as well as cinematic style (Holman 178). Both Frank Whitford in his Expresssionist Portraits and Preminger agree that the writer Kasimir Edschmid best formulated the principles of this movement:

> No one is in any doubt that the superficial reality which we perceive cannot be the truth.

> Reality has to be created by us. The true meaning of the object has to be uprooted. We must not be satisfied with the trusted, presumed, recorded facts; the image of the world has to be mirrored honestly, without falsification. But that image is in ourselves alone.
> Thus the entire world of the Expressionist artist becomes visionary . . .
> Facts have significance only insofar as the artist's hand reaches through them to grasp at what lies behind (9; 267).

Mimetic art is replaced by the image of mimetic art, as a subjective projection, and the discourse of that image proclaims the validity of psychic states and religious revelations and the unreliability of naturalist approaches. At this point, justifications for both political engagement and religious conviction inhere in the expressionistic pronouncement. Pre-Raphaelite artists often chose religious subjects, and the devout expression of religious conviction is classified within expressionism.

The dynamics of expressionism have largely demonstrated political engagement, although severe ideological disputes occurred between specific groups. Ludwig Rubiner, an Activist, proclaimed: "the proletarian liberates the world from the economic past of capitalism; the poet liberates it from the emotional past of capitalism," while Futurists "often sounded like proto-fascists" (Whitford 13). Indeed, Walter Benjamin discusses the aesthetic emphasis on the image of war by the Futurists in the epilogue to "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction":

> [mankind's] self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction

> as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order. This is the situation of politics which Fascism is rendering aesthetic. Communism responds by politicizing art (Illuminations 242).

In "The Artist as Producer," Benjamin criticizes Activism: "the very principle on which this collective is formed is reactionary; no wonder that its effect could never be revolutionary," but he insists that "[Futurism's] formulations deserve to be accepted by dialecticians" (Reflections 227, Illuminations). Benjamin's commentary sheds light on the difficulties of ideological analysis in movements like F.T. Marinetti's (Italian Futurism) and Activism; differences persist, but so do anti-traditional attitudes, setting them apart from naturalism.

> A woodcut in the program of the first Brucke announces: With faith in evolution, and in a new generation of creators and enjoyers, we summon the young to unite -- and as the young, the bearers of the future, we will wrest from the entrenched older forces the freedom to act and to live. To convey the creative impulse, direct and unfalsified, is to be one of us (Whitford, text facing title page).

This proclamation helps show the relatedness of expressionism to poetic theories of expression through the focus on the creative impulse and through the revolutionary spirit associated with romanticism.

The antirealism of expressionism is both an extension of and a reaction to impressionism which tended to concentrate on the presentation of image in the service of naturalist discourse. The aspect of distortion noted by Holman as a feature of "European expressionistic drama"

demarcates the reaction to impressionism which sought a harmony with naturalist presentations, and "distortion" has become a common way of describing expressionism's products (178). The perception of a distortion is only possible through comparison to a naturalist rendering, so the gesture of distortion evokes a metatextual perspective in that it implies its dialectical opposition to naturalism. At times, impressionistic techniques might be applied in an expressionistic work because the ideological orientation of this product can emphasize a dialectically antirealistic discourse opposed to naturalist realism.

Expressionism was prominent before World War I, but after the war the surrealist movement employed techniques associated with expressionism (First Manifesto) and, later, emphasized the importance of ideology in aesthetic praxis (Second Manifesto). Benjamin recognized the importance of surrealism's contribution to historical materialism:

> Only when in technology body and image so interpenetrate that all revolutionary tension becomes bodily collective innervation, and all the bodily innervations of the collective become revolutionary discharge, has reality transcended itself to the extent demanded by the Communist Manifesto. For the moment, only the Surrealists have understood its present commands ("Surrealism" 239).

To approach an expressionistic work, one must consider its rhetorical stance, the quality of its discourse, which in expressionism is evoked by the image presentation of the text. This expressionistic perspective with its emphasis on

discursive strategies transforms conventional literary categories: a work operating at a metatextual level ceases to be a fiction; rather it is a discourse similar, though in a less formal sense, to academic discourse which itself is not properly a fiction. The inward turn taken by surrealism comes ultimately to embrace expression itself. For this reason the term "expressionism" better designates this more fully discursive approach to aesthetic production, for both surrealism and expressionism refer to particular artistic techniques, but surrealism remains more recognizable as art dealing with unconscious mental sources brought out into the light, as it were, and as a technique precisely articulated by Breton and others, while the lack of a clear understanding of expressionism is rectified through the comparison of ideology and technique within the historical context of the development of theories of poetic expression.

It seems fair to say that surrealism is a major part of modern expressionism, particularly with regard to its political orientation and to its dedication to subjective space, but metatextual, discursive elements are less widely identified with surreal techniques. Brooke-Rose discerns "a certain confusion as to just what [postmodernism] involves" (344), and she structures her study of contemporary writing according to the "formal division . . . between parody and stylisation," between metafiction and surfiction (364). The recognition of expressionism as a general movement including

both these categories or tendencies enables the recognition of the transformation of aesthetic production by the ubiquitous image of the cinematic age. Moreover, it resolves the awkward problem of "dating" the postmodern as post-1945- or post-1960-production, when many "postmodern" gestures develop before World War Two.

This recognition of an aesthetic dominance of cinematic production also allows the characterization of modernist writing as expressionism (an identification already widely accepted) with the differentiating tendencies of modernism and postmodernism described according to their ideological allegiance or antagonism, respectively, towards traditional, naturalistic discourse. For the purposes of further discussion, this "modernist" tendency will be referred to as "expressionism," and that "postmodern" tendency will be referred to as "modern expressionism." This may seem a bit confusing, but, on the whole, it will allow for a recognition of a modernist attitude in pre-twentieth-century literature as an expressionistic one, while it designates a postmodern attitude as a twentieth-century phenomenon associated with cinematic production. This discussion of expressionism concludes with some remarks on expressionistic cinema.

Expressionistic cinema "defied the conventions of 'realism' . . . turning the image into an artifice of madness"; it "formulated psychological structures through

artificial, highly stylized sets that reflected characters' states of mind" (Kolker 7, 21-22). This expressionistic approach typified a broad trend of reaction against American cinematic naturalism which included several movements, including the early French avant-garde (often surrealist projects), Eisenstein's use of montage, Italian neo-realism, and even American film noir (7-8). This last is not surprising in light of the strong contribution of American playwrights, like Wilder and O'Neill, to dramatic expressionism (Preminger 268). German expressionistic film usually projected a "stagey" tone since "expressionist films were always shot in the studio, never outdoors" (Katz 397). This relation between dramatic and cinematic production, characterized by the image of the stage, suggests an essential link which connects these forms, a link that suggests a potential partially recognized by Aristotle in his characterization of drama as a superior art form in The Poetics (115).[2.1]

Paul Coates' recent study describes the dialectic of expressionism in film:

> it is often claimed that there are two tendencies in film history: on the one hand, realism, transparent reproduction of the world's appearances; and on the other the stylization and distortion associated with expressionism. . . . . It would however be too large a generalization to subsume expressionism under stylization. . . . Expressionism's legacy is in fact the use of stylization to indicate the state of mind viewing the world (156).

The virtue of expressionistic film is thus found in its projection of a subjective attitude mediating a view of the world, a process parallel to perception itself. The claim of objective perception has seemed insufficient ever since Freud emphasized the reflex arc of sensual perception. Due to the sensory lag time of this reflex arc, one can never perceive what is, only what was, and if objectivity only consists of an approximation, rather than an exact observation, the distinction between perception and illusion is much less apparent. Moreover, it is this sensory lag which makes film possible as the illusion of motion instilled by moving still frames. Therefore, the recognition of subjective play in all perception and in cinematic representation is much less pretentious than the blind assertion of objectivity in the face of all this sensory/sensorium play.

Coates also describes some of the important motifs of German expressionistic cinema "shot through with images of revolt against the father," a rejection of traditional values (52). "Expressionist language was a primal scream at one's isolated entry into this fierce world . . . localized as the German fathers' hatred of the sons they were to dispatch to the trenches of World War I" (48). Here the subject is seen as an object of manipulation by systemic forces, promoting fear, not paranoia -- since this is a real condition of being manipulated -- but such fear also

engenders reactive rebellion, and this, in turn, effects a kind of split in the subject. Coates describes:

> the expressionistic double is the individual who is one person in him/herself and another when in the crowd, borne along by a mob that externalizes repressed rebellious instincts. It is the doubling of rationality by myth described in Adorno's analysis of the archaic bedrock of apparent enlightenment (49).

Such a motif recalls the familiar, doubled figures of Poe's William Wilson and of Wilde's Dorian Gray, suggesting them as rational beings caught up by an unreal, mythic fate, in the terms of Coates' analysis. Poe and Wilde will be considered in the next section as practioners of expressionistic aesthetics. This expressionistic theme of the double will also be discussed with respect to Beckett's treatment and, perhaps, resolution of it in his Film (see chapter five). What is important about Coates' remarks on motifs of German expressionistic cinema is the recognition that reactive, antagonistic attitudes towards tradition and that complex subjective states informing representation are generalized in the larger, aesthetic movement of modern expressionism as postmodern attitudes. Moreover, the real/unreal opposition in expressionistic representation is fundamental to the ordering of generic discourse presented in the next chapter (see the "Image-Genre Grid").

As in the other arts, cinematic movements that showed independence from naturalist conventions varied in their degree of distance from these conventions, but they all

employed the metatextual opposition to typical realism through some kind of alteration of their presented images, a gesture roughly equivalent to signifier play in printed texts. A more detailed discussion of expressionistic film will take place in Chapters Four and Five. Here, the recognition of dialectical congruence between cinematic forms and other art forms of twentieth-century expressionism suggests that these dynamics are typical of the cinematic age. The alteration of presentations to distinguish them from realism and the dialectical exchanges among the various movements characterize much of twentieth-century modernism and postmodernism. Highly individualistic styles convey a metatextual, discursive opposition to naturalism, and the growing emphasis on ideological orientations characterizes this dialectical tension in modern expressionism. This tension allows for aesthetic freeplay, marked by the individualistic styles of the artists, to be balanced by specific ideologies, the social component of art.

Discourse and Intertextuality

Discourse

The correlation of forms of discourse with forms of production shows how expressionism emerges from metatextual tendencies with roots deep in literary history. Writing

systems presented a quantum leap in the development of literary discourse by freeing the text from the dominion of memory. The external inscription of text brought literary production out of the monological discourse of orality, where "there is nothing outside the thinker, no text, to enable him or her to produce the same line of thought again or even to verify whether he or she has done so or not" (Ong 34). Writing enabled the development of logical systems; consequently, a conception of the modern informs Aristotle's Poetics, arguably the first literary theory of a comprehensive range. This literary theory describes the formal aspects of expression; in other words, this text is metatext. The difference between a formal system and an informal one is only that an informal system is less obligated to be complete. With Aristotle, a pronounced intention to provide a complete system must be considered against the fact that only part of this system survives, so his study to this extent is informal. This quality of incompletion, a lack of closure, requires thought to fill in the gaps, developing a participatory discourse, and such informality is often an aspect of aesthetic presentations.

Parody is one aesthetic device that requires a meta-literary awareness for its comprehension. Petronius' Satyricon, despite its many lacunae, portrays a protagonist who is a student of rhetoric, and, in the course of this portrayal, much is said about rhetoric indirectly through

examples of "good" and "bad" poetry. Indeed, "Petronius' 'epic' on the Roman civil wars has set scholars to arguing whether or not it is an actual parody," provoking a discursive dialogue of which the true subject is canonical ideology (Crumb 144)[2.2] This novel exhibits expressionistic tendencies in that it presents an informal metatext which provokes discourse. Further, according to Chambers' typology, this discursive dialogue concerning Petronius' "epic" (and The Satyricon in general) is ironic in that it challenges canonical agreements, and this indicates a political opposition to received tradition.[2.3] Petronius and his literary disciple John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, both employ an expressionistic, novelistic discourse with explicit political overtones, so, to this extent, they are not only representative of "modernist" discourse, but they also anticipate the emergence of "postmodern" discourse.[2.4]

Satirical writing always provides a metatext in that it demands a comparison to some originary discourse, and this is particularly the case when satire involves the conversion of lyric poetry forms into vehicles for scathing social commentary, since the parodic turn implies a more formal discourse. This remains true whether this conversion is brought about by the later Roman poets or by the Earl of Rochester, so long as the conversion brings about the new use of an older form. Expressionism did not just arise in the twentieth century as a new technique; it developed out

of expressionistic techniques used in literate cultures which had some conception of modernity.

Parody and satire develop a conception of the image of text by providing text which demands a comparison with an original text; this comparison emphasizes differences between the texts as a discursive dialectic, but this dialectic is also contained in the differences of the images of these texts. This conception of the image of text is widely acknowledged with respect to literary allusions, considered to be images of other texts (see "Intertextuality," below). Another metatextual device promoting this conception can be found in epistolary novels which use the form of letters to portray stories. This approach is not required for a naturalistic mimesis; although it often heightens the illusion of actuality in novel portrayal, it is also an affective device, seeking to close the emotional distance between text and reader and heightening the impact of emotions in the story. This subjective component to epistolary presentation is hardly objective; in its attempt to give greater weight to the emotions conveyed by the story, it emphasizes a subjective dimension of the text.

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein uses letters to frame the image of her text; the narrative story line is contained within letters which seek to close the great distances separating the correspondents. Just as the letters

themselves close the distance between characters, the images of these letters close the distance between the text and its reader. The text situates itself within the more personal, experiential context of a reader who receives letters as a personal correspondence. Such letters use the image of text to strengthen their connection to personal subjectivity with the rhetorical consequence that this use of letters serves to personalize the story, to bring it closer to readers. Through this artifice which seeks a reduction of aesthetic distance, it becomes an expressionistic device; its heightened emotions reveal a broad concern with social transformation on a more intimate level with the audience. The letters of Mary Shelley's novel not only focus on the wild, natural terrains of her settings, but they also reveal relatively dysfunctional systems of justice, as well as framing the creature's perusal of Milton's Paradise Lost, contextualizing the broad social sphere to which her discourse addresses itself through her story of an "artificial man," as a kind of allegory of humanity's artifices of civilization. Richardson's Clarissa and Stoker's Dracula also seek to implement social change; indeed, it may fairly be said that Stoker seeks to undo what Richardson has wrought, but all this "affective" writing has little to do with the actual stories that are told. Consequently, these novels emphasize the importance of an

affective discourse in writing, a subjective component of the image of text.

These rhetorical devices -- parody, satire, epistolary presentation -- all refer the reader to a metatextual, discursive context in order to situate the story element, its literal message. This positioning is necessary to convey contextual differences within the text; this positioning is dialectically opposed to mainstream, naturalistic presentations of story which implicitly subscribe to a monolithic, totalized context. Such rhetorical devices ought to be recognized as expressionistic tendencies in literature insofar as they call attention to a dialogical, polarized context underlying literary production. Further, in the twentieth century, they represent fundamental approaches to literary expressionism in which parody and satire figure as major forces of representation and in which the subjective dimension emphasized through letters has broadened into a variety of subjective forms of contact based on dreams. Coates writes: "at a time when the holy texts of traditional religion have lost their authority, the locus of authority shifts to dreams" (160). The concept of intertextuality plays an important role in this metatextual, subjective shift in the aesthetic domain, and the relation between expressionistic writing and forms of intertextuality is explored in the following section.

An incomplete system is equivalent to a lack of closure, and contemporary thought is faced with the conception of the necessity of incomplete systems. Discourse as dialogue or dialectic is inherently incomplete: there is always more to be said or written. This same incompletion or lack of closure also characterizes the image, for the image is made up of discrete bits of information, but there is no point at which an image achieves completion.

Some may feel a photographic image to be more complete than a literary one, but literature conveys in its images more as well as less than a photograph; indeed, ideas like "feeling" and "tone" applied to photographic analysis are of literary origin and, to some extent, represent an aspiration of the photograph to achieve a literary density. In this sense, the formal, linear analysis of literature structures perception of visual technologies. McLuhan remarked: "when faced with a totally new situation, we tend always to attach ourselves to the objects, to the flavor of the most recent past"; such an attachment is the very image of Freud's sensory reflex arc of perception (The Medium is the Massage 74). Moreover, photographs always distort some qualities of that which they represent: the technologies of reproduction enforce incompletion.

All forms of image reproduction are approximations; this fragmented quality of the image is the basis for

Benjamin's revisioning of allegory through the recognition that completion is impossible. Insofar as the image represents a systemic presentation of data, the image is discursive, and this discursiveness emphasizes incompletion. The reader is left to speculate about aspects of this discourse and about the thoughts of the author who provides it. In this way, the subjectivity of the author is emphasized, and readers can only approach the author's subjectivity through their own subjectivity. Audience speculation, however, is enriched by the discourse of the text which provides images conveying its discourse. Texts that participate in various metatextual strategies constitute an expressionistic "tradition" which is discernibly different from that of texts which seek to provide a naturalistic sense of closure, a complete rendering of representational mimesis. The impact upon readers is intense because the naturalistic tradition invites them to participate in an illusion of a complete discourse, while expressionist texts proclaim their illusory qualities, forcing readers to participate in the construction of discourse, in effect, to become writers.

This difference is theoretically useful because it is readily discernible from the surface of texts through their presented images, so the participation of any particular text in either the naturalistic or the expressionistic type of discourse can be ascertained with less controversy. Of

course, such participation is often a matter of degree, but the recognition of these types of discourse accords with the historical differences between oral and written forms of production, with naturalism arising from orality and expressionism from literacy, respectively, although the broader development of expressionistic discourse evolves coextensively with the domination of print technology until it becomes itself a more dominant form in the era of image production. An unexpected and somewhat paradoxical conclusion develops here in that the oral form which is actually more limited by the subjectivity of its authors resists this limitation through naturalist objectivity, while the more formal verbal forms which mainstream the production of the objective text actually invite more subjective freeplay, and a number of writers choose to emphasize the subjective dimension in their texts.

Expressionistic writing develops out of its own expressionistic "tradition," as a dialectical reaction against monolithic formularization of literary production which counterproductively narrows literary discourse. Probably, the creative impulse itself resists cumbersome restraints, but the restriction of discourse is anathema to itself, since such restrictions eventually would diminish the capacity to conceptualize, bringing the advancement of knowledge to a halt. The common conception of expressionism as a character-based form of distortion is deceptive: a

definition of this sort obscures the formal, discursive priorities conveyed through the expressionistic image. Expressionism's attention to form broadens the range of discourse in writing to include purely formal aspects, imparting a metatextual dimension to all portrayals. Image devices that bring about formal recognition in such texts operate differently from those used in naturalism, and since the natural is considered real, formal concerns are viewed as distortions. Thus, the common conception in this matter itself becomes a distortion through the legerdemain of elevating the natural over the formal when both partake of a discursive telos and both offer ways of structuring perception.

The attraction of modern writing, of "modernism," resides largely in its use of formal devices. Film as a medium typified by its use of montage is more a form of expressionistic writing than of naturalistic writing because the manipulation of image can only be approached from formal perspectives which interpret the discourses conveyed by these images, while a naturalistic, objective mimesis tends to reduce discourse to an illusory sense of closure based only on the surface of the cinematic image as a complete representation. The dynamics of such dialectical discourses operate through intertextuality.

Intertextuality

Intertextuality is a general literary quality that operates across both generic and story elements. Chambers finds that canonicity is "a variant form of what we otherwise call intertextuality: a relational network linking all texts, known and unknown, actual and potential" (19). Any relation between two or more texts, or even discourses, may be characterized as intertextual. The adaptation of a novel or a play into a film, an intermedial movement, is intertextual since two texts are produced and remain in a certain relation to each other. All forms of allusions are intertextual. A typology of intertextual relations would be helpful, but, clearly, such a typology could be an enormous undertaking. This study provides an elaboration of intertextual comparisons in the image-genre grid and of a particular kind of allusion called the intertextual array (see chapter three). This section focuses on a short history of intertextual dynamics and attempts to elaborate certain concepts of intertextuality, such as consensual and conflictive forms of intertextuality and the concept of an expressionistic "moment."

The variations of an epic bard might be called "intertextual" insofar as an "oral literature" context remains in conventional usage. Oral art reproduced as literary text produces a tendency to view oral and written

forms as subject to common textual evaluations. The work of Walter Ong (Orality and Literacy) and others clearly shows that this view is not correct; oral and written works are structured differently. Variations in epic telling ought simply to be seen as a common story, unless common elements are observed in different epic tales. The epic conventions represent a form of oral intertextuality.

At the next level, that of written manuscripts, the technology of writing systems implies the conveyance of written products across national boundaries; the text can travel more easily than can the poet. An international perspective becomes possible because of this broader base, and Bakhtin has suggested that knowledge shared on a multilingual basis is a fundamental aspect of discourse in the novel (11). For Bakhtin, the novel arises in later Greek and Roman culture, and by combining conclusions from both Bakhtin and Ong certain correlations emerge. Poetry becomes the typical form of oral discourse associated with a local nationalism based on a common language and with a valued national past, while novelistic discourse represents the aesthetic result of writing technologies exchanged on an international basis and grounded in contemporary dialogue. Here the idea of modernity finds its typical expression in the novel, and, in turn, the novel becomes a possible site for expressionistic literary representation.

The exchange of written manuscripts and early print texts tends to keep intertextual relations at a level of borrowing story elements; for example, "The Knight's Tale" by Chaucer is borrowed from an epic by Boccaccio, and this borrowing contributes to the argument that The Canterbury Tales functions as a novelistic discourse. Since Chaucer's story is a naturalistic portrayal of an epic story, there is little incentive generated by Chaucer's text to move to the metatextual, expressionistic ground for comparisons between the two versions. Chaucer's presentation neither requires nor invites such a comparison. One reads the natural, if borrowed, story.

The widespread dissemination of printed texts transforms intertextual relations in several ways; here, the eighteenth century begins to yield examples of early expressionistic writing because print presents text as the image of text. Sterne's Tristram Shandy with its black page and squiggles calls attention to the print medium in its capability of reproducing more than just written words. Mandeville's Fable of the Bees in its two-volume course explicitly groups within the generic label of "fable" such diverse presentations as doggerel verse, philosophical dialogue, the essay, and even the reproduction of an actual legal indictment. Blake's illuminated manuscripts integrate word and image in a single presentation. Rex Stamper has

suggested that the problems of narration in Fielding's Tom Jones may be ameliorated by the recognition that:

> the central critical issue might not be a matter of authority versus freedom but in developing in each reader the capabilities for finding and developing a multiplicity of responses that will accept the author's authority as well as the reader's right to freely accept or reject that authority depending upon individual needs (196).

Such a reading accords with the idea of image reception as a participatory, speculative discourse described above.

Swift's Gulliver's Travels in its several parts connects stylistically to other important works, and, further, it invites this recognition for a full appreciation. Some explanation may be helpful here: Gulliver's adventure in Lilliput is presented in the style of Rabelais, as Gulliver here suggests the image of Gargantua; the story in Brobdingnag often uses the presentational style of More's Utopia in its rehearsals of the giants' reasonable society; the voyages in part three obviously parody the Royal Academy, but, beyond this, their stylistic ironies recall Dante's Inferno; only in part four, the kingdom of the Houyhnhnms, does Swift present his own style that is of a completely surreal presentation, and this has some antecedent in Apuleius' The Golden Ass. It is no accident that his narrator, Gulliver, remains so fully attached to these creatures. Gulliver's attachment functions as a textual mark of Swift's signature, an image of his stylistic development. Today one might remark on the

common effect between this last section of Gulliver's Travels and of Kafka's The Metamorphosis (a discussion of intertextual relations between Swift and Kafka comes in chapter four). Swift anticipates twentieth century styles, which are often highly allusive, by assembling a variety of styles within a single work. Further, the discourses of these antecedent styles possess a common feature in that they are all social critiques. Within his own social criticism, Swift has mobilized an army of antecedent stylists, stylists who are, to varying degrees, critics of received tradition. With Swift the concept of intertextual borrowing or plagiarism does not really describe his insciptions of major styles. These images of style invite the recognition of their sources, and the content of these stories is Swift's own, so "borrowing" is a less appropriate description than is a "comparative discourse." Swift's novel is an example of expressionistic writing.

Matthew Lewis provides a more conventional avoidance of plagiarism through formal allusion by crediting the sources "of which I am aware myself" in an "advertisement" that precedes the text of The Monk (6). Lewis may represent a more conservative pole with respect to tradition than Swift, but, nevertheless, such intertextual strategies as these of Swift and Lewis suggest a "collaborative" intertextuality cited by Kellman as a quality of feminist discourse (7).

While such "collaborative" or consensual intertextuality may be a characteristic of feminist discourse, it is hardly limited to feminist discourse. Feminist consensual intertextuality tends to be anti-traditional, an important feature of the allusive strategy of the intertextual array, and feminist consensual intertextuality is not limited to allusions to female writers: Wittig alludes to Kafka and LeGuin alludes to Beckett (see Chapters Four and Five). Ascribing this form of intertextuality solely to "feminist" discourse is a restrictive obfuscation. Consensual and conflictive intertextual strategies play an important role in the development of expressionistic discourse. Often, expressionistic discourse coheres with feminist discourse, but this is not always the case (surrealism is one example of this controversy).

The consensual forms of intertextuality practiced by Swift and Lewis are only half the story. The famous "satire wars" carried out in eighteenth-century texts constitute the conflictive side of this intertextual development. To cite just one example, Rochester provides an antecedent to Byron's attack on the poet laureate in Don Juan in this invective against Dryden in "Timon":

> "As if our old world modestly withdrew
> And here in private had brought forth a new."
> There are two lines! Who but he durst presume
> To make th' old world a new withdrawing room,
> Where of another world she's brought to bed?

> What a brave midwife is a laureate's head!
> ("Dialog, Decadence, and Expressionism" 146).

All these examples demonstrate the broad interpenetration of textual modes in the eighteenth century, operating across all levels of narrative structure, from text presentation to generic transformation to textual complexity of the story element. These arose as a consequence of the more widespread dissemination of printed texts. Further, they manifest the development of consensual and conflictive forms of intertextuality as an expressionistic literary device. Taken together with other forms of expressionism, such as Richardson's epistolary presentation in Clarissa and Mackenzie's "gun-wadding" novel The Man of Feeling, all these works indicate a broad aesthetic tendency toward expressionistic writing by developing the production of the image of text during this period of literary history.

During the nineteenth century, expressionistic intertextuality continues and innovates new literary strategies; moreover, strong formulations of expressionist theory develop (Coleridge, Mill, and Pater -- Preminger 266). Previous expressionist praxis evolved into a movement of expressionist aesthetics, and this integration of theory and practice, again, in turn provided the basis for the development of expressionism. One may view the genre of the gothic as a generic site within which naturalism and expressionism engaged in their dialectical play, ultimately

deriving the expressionistic genre of the fantastic (Todorov's), typified by James' Turn of the Screw and Poe's "The Black Cat" and "William Wilson" (Brooke-Rose 65; "Narrative Discourse in Poe" 33). In The Monk (1796), naturalist concerns allied with a conventional supernaturalism are offset by metatextual strategies including intertextual richness (above) and the inscription of an adventure story within the supernatural frame, so the text presents two "stories," one natural and one supernatural. Breton found Lewis' novel to be exemplary of surrealism (First Manifesto 15) In William Beckford's Vathek, an oriental supernaturalism is presented, and this invites a comparison with Christian supernaturalism. Such strategies engage the usual thrust of gothic endeavor (to establish a world of natural reasonableness supported by a pious supernaturalism) by complexing naturalist portrayal into metatextual discourse and by elaborating the supernatural into a diverse field inviting speculation.

Miller's analysis concludes by finding "the Gothic as a literature of spiritual disquiet" (204; see also Chapter Four). The infusion of occult images from alchemy and the Tarot contributed to alternate supernatural and even secular unreal forms of representation. Alchemical and Tarot imagery are presented by Poe in "William Wilson," "Ligeia," and "The Fall of the House of Usher" ("Narrative Discourse in Poe" 37-8; Peithman 68, n. 35)[2.5] The Victorian satire

and bemused antecedent to Eliot's The Waste Land, James Thomson's City of Dreadful Night connects its presentation to the major trumps of Tarot.[2.6]

Another gothic "classic," Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray conflates the presentation of a naive moral tale with a complex aesthetic analogue. Both Dorian's portrait and the extended aesthetic conversations ground this novel in a discourse more aesthetic than moral, and the novel's story functions as a critique of naturalist mimesis ("Narrative Discourse in Poe" 33). In addition, Dorian's unique picture anticipates image dynamics that are inherent to cinematic presentation. Wilde's novel may be seen as participating in highly conflictive modes of intertextuality operating through literary parody. The lampooning of styles that occurs in Poe (the howlers "How to Write a Blackwood Article" and "A Predicament") and Melville (Tashtego's "birth" in Moby-Dick and early parts of Pierre) is ideologically at odds with the textual sources called forth; this indicates a drive toward revision of sources taking place within the broad context of the gothic.

Harold Bloom's The Anxiety of Influence details a theory of conflictual intertextuality, of the revisions of sources, and, indeed, his treatment focuses on romantic figures involved with expressionism. Bloom's theory is limited by its lack of inclusion of more consensual forms of intertextuality, since its premise requires revision that is

always substantial in order to justify a high degree of aesthetic achievement.

Obviously, the discernment of a consensual or of a conflictive intertextual relation between a text and its source reveals a significant mark of ideological perspective in literary works. The use of image in texts during the nineteenth century often broadens received discourses by providing alternatives. Lord Byron in Don Juan as well as Poe and Melville (as cited above) would parody more traditional styles, and the tension between text and context developed discourse into more formal freeplay. Melville in Pierre and Stoker in Dracula provided unconventional social images to provoke social complacency. Wilde's novel turns the naturalistic image on its head by emphasizing the deadening qualities of realistic portrayal, and Flaubert in Salammbo reanimates the dead image of ancient history with an active, imaginative freeplay. The consolidation of the expressionistic movement manifested itself through an active engagement opposing naturalist traditions in which expressionistic images contended with classical naturalism. This resulted in a generally expanded discourse, but also in a general confusion concerning the values and categories of literary production.

One may ask whether these types of intertextual relatedness, consensual or conflictive (collaborative or contentious), merely constitute another form of the artist's

relation to tradition. Ong, Benjamin, and Bakhtin have all suggested that the aesthetic of any art form is related to and affected by its mode of production. Within this context, the concept of tradition does not allow for sufficiently precise formulations, since each major form of production contributes a different discursive approach to "tradition" and since a monolithic aggregate of literary production considered as "tradition" argues against differentiation. Moreover, Benjamin's discussion of the image of art disrupts the connection between art and tradition. The era of the printed text is already history; analysis can no longer be served only by literary categories based on the typographical representation of language on a page. Books still play a crucial role in making aesthetic determinations, but the electronic image has become just as crucial a factor. It would be premature to assume that electronic presentation has not transformed the entire system of signification. Consensual and conflictive intertextuality will partly characterize the relation between a text and its antecedents and help to determine the formal types of the literary product: expressionism or naturalism.

Neither expressionism nor naturalism are static concepts, but each participates in a dynamic way in the formal constitution of any literary work. The consensual intertextuality of Swift (above) is expressionistic since it

invites the appreciation of its source texts to fully apprehend its discursive field, and the consensual intertextuality of Stoker in Dracula where the characters recall Shakespeare's Hamlet in order to present a literary analogue for the situations they are experiencing, shows how expressionism can be employed as a mimetic device in order to more clearly tell the story during a time when the comparison of life to writings is a popular pastime, for this occurs as well as the discursive connection between these texts which is expressionistic (this bears upon the theme of the soul and the related problems of contemplation and action). It is useful to have a concept of an "expressionistic moment" to help determine if and how an expressionistic device is discursively functioning in a work. This can help determine if a specific device is part of a strategy of reification or a part of a more progressive discourse. Sometimes a conservative discourse prefers a modernist presentation to suggest a more progressive orientation; in such cases, expressionistic intertextual connections serve a naturalist discourse. In regard to Eliot and Thomson (above), one may say the device of the Tarot intertext enjoys its expressionistic moment in The City of Dreadful Night, but in The Waste Land this intertext serves more traditionalist concerns of a naturalist discourse. Because Eliot uses the Tarot as one item in his

list of spiritual impoverishments, his metatext is narrowed more than it is broadened.

The widely recognized phenomenon of nineteenth-century conflictual intertextuality, often anti-traditional in its applications, during the twentieth century often provides a vehicle for the conveyance of more traditional ideas, while anti-traditional works come to a broader participation in forms of collaborative or consensual intertextuality, a gesture represented by the signatures appended to The Second Manifesto of Surrealism and applied in textual arrays. Of course, the word "tradition" here is used in its naturalistic conception, for expressionistic nineteenth-century conflictive intertextuality often forms a "tradition" with its twentieth century consensual counterpart. It no longer seems possible to speak of a single tradition in literary discourse other than the general production of literary products, so more formal discursive categories serve better, such as the typology of naturalism or expressionism and the recognition of forms of production as types of discourse. Both share a general orientation as representation, and neither is mutually exclusive, allowing for a more precise description of literary structure.

This thumbnail sketch of the history of intertextuality has helped to provide two ways of classifying intertextuality as it contributes to expressionist writing:

consensual/conflictive intertextuality and the expressionist intertextual moment. Forms of intertextuality provide discursive strategies that must be appreciated on the metatextual level. It remains to consider the changes in twentieth-century technologies to fully describe the nature of expressionistic writing and to appreciate cinematic presentation as an expressionistic medium. This is the subject of Chapter Three.

PART TWO: THE TEXT OF IMAGE

CHAPTER THREE

POSTMODERNISM, DREAMS, TEXTUAL ARRAYS

During the twentieth century new technologies of aesthetic presentation have developed, and changes brought about by these new products have become an important aesthetic concern. Just as developments in printing technology fostered the development of a more expressionist approach to literary production, visual media which presented text as image promoted the avant-garde techniques of expressionism. The industrial age, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, brought forth the innovative aesthetic media of photography and cinema; these became more widespread and more refined in the early twentieth century. Moreover, astonishing developments in systems of thought (like quantum mechanics) as well as innovative ideological conceptions (like Marxist analysis) contributed to the broadened ambience of aesthetic endeavor at this time. A late twentieth-century perspective in which the consummation of the marriage between video cameras and computers is a fiat provides an appreciation of how these visual media have transformed the aesthetic arena by providing a universal medium which can accommodate images whatever their source (video) with a source which can generate any image imaginable (computer). Neither is sound out of reach, for

the synthesizer can generate any physical frequency or sound, and this may easily be mixed into either the computer or the video component. Truly, the production of the visual image is now limited only by the imagination of the producer.

Postmodern Forms

Photography, film, and video are the typical aesthetic contacts of the post-industrial or electronic age, just as printed texts became the typical mode during the earlier period of industrialization. Not only have these media proliferated, but visual presentation has also transformed the writing styles of printed texts. This study recognizes three phases of visual presentation in printed texts. The first, discussed in the previous chapter, concerns the broad movement in literature toward the development of the image as a discursive vehicle when text began to be a means to the end of the production of images. The second, developed at length in the next two chapters on Kafka and Beckett, involves the production of texts as image montages in which discourses are altered by structural differences in the images of these texts (see "Definite and Indefinite Images," below). The third, more contemporary form, for the present outside the scope of this study, describes the production of texts in which images are structured as if they were films,

writing more or less as screenplay; exemplars include Burroughs and Pynchon. In general, the first of these phases correlates to "modernism" while the second and third are characteristically "postmodern." Although a postmodern "moment" can occur in any of these phases, typically, the second and third phases are characteristically postmodern.

Visual technologies have brought about a quantum leap in the capacity of art to signify in that any image contains much more information than does a word, but appreciation of this condition has lagged behind, and theories of signification have remained based upon the verbal, the written word. There is a kind of inertia involved here; since theories of meaning have reached a high level of development with respect to words, the tendencies have been to separate the studies of verbal arts from the studies of image arts, an infertile compartmentalization, or a more promising development has been to apply theories of verbal meaning to image production, but this has its limitations. Christian Metz explains one major limitation: "the problem of cinematic signification cannot be convieniently treated *if one holds to the definition of language as a system of* signs destined to be used for communication" (288).[3.1] This is basically the problem of linearity associated with codes of direct correspondence which assume an effective, naturalistic referential context. This is the reason why this study develops a synthesis of theorists, like Benjamin

and Hillman, who have developed broad approaches capable of handling both verbal and imagist aesthetic production.

Despite the chronological progression, of verbal arts giving way to imagist forms, this study finds a reconciliation in treating image production as prior to verbal production, based on the coherence between image production and sense-perception. After all, language seeks to mediate perceptual experience. There is a larger philosophical problem here, an epistemological difficulty articulated by Beckett (see Chapter Five on Film) that perceptions themselves may only be representations. While film spectators sometimes need to be reminded that the images of film are still only representations, not perceptions frozen in time, these representations do call into question one's presumed faith in perception itself. This problem, however, does not interfere with treating image representations as prior to verbal representations by considering language as subordinate to the image field; in fact, this priority of the image may be more accurate in an epistemological sense.

The work of Walter Ong delineated differences in reception and signification between the written word and the spoken word, and although "writing" in the Derridian sense remains the model of meaning, presentation became a cogent consideration in the interpretation of aesthetic meaning. Typically, discussions of signification focused on

allegorical versus symbolic understanding of oral or literal presentations (see allegory I and allegory II, chapter one). Marshall McLuhan sought to identify changes in signification and reception brought about by electronic media (The Medium is the Massage), and he provided some helpful suggestions in this area, especially his designations of "hot" and "cool" media, based on physiological reception of presentations: "hot media are . . . low in participation, and cool media are high in participation or completion by the audience" (Understanding Media 36). This is an important distinction which sets a precedent for the distinction between definite and indefinite images (below). Even though print and cinema are characterized as "hot" media, innovative writers, like Kafka and Beckett, developed image strategies to increase the participation of the audience through a sort of "hot" and "cool" imagery.

Often, the appreciation of the importance of presentation in the production of meaning remains limited to verbal analysis, with film being treated as a kind of embellishment more than as a transformative factor. "The printed book had encouraged artists to reduce all forms of expression as much as possible to the single descriptive and narrative plane of the printed word," to a linear, naturalistic discourse (62). Although the previous chapter has focused on writers who exploited the image potential of print, McLuhan's characterization accounts well for

mainstream production and criticism. The complexity of image presentations brings about "information overload" and the "resort to the study of configurations, like the sailor in Edgar Allan Poe's Maelstrom" (viii).

A configurative or systemic approach interprets discourse more directly from the presentational surface (verbal text or image). This is the attitude of a writer (who produces text); in this reading discourse is emphasized as a component of the surface rather than being presumed to follow the surface, as discourse follows for that reader who gathers information and who will complete a reading and then interpret a discourse. Naturalist presentations use the image surface as a sufficient condition, expecting a didactic reading, and discourse proceeds as an obvious consequence to this surface, while expressionistic presentations explore the discourse of the presented image, provoking its reader to read, as a writer does, into interpreting every step of the way, so the surface becomes more directly discursive.

A satirical joke about stories and their morals will illustrate how this process works by presenting the joke from indefinition to definition to closure. "A man collected" is an indefinite image, for one may not be sure whether "collected" is a verb or an adjective, and each usage proposes a somewhat, different meaning. "A man collected things" is more definite, assuring the usage of a

verb, but there is still much information wanting. So far, the reader who writes has progressed from weighing two possible interpretations to considering what sort of man collects things. The joke begins: "a man collected thrones" which presents still more definition, promoting the recognition of a monarchic fetish. "A man collected thrones, and he lived in a glass house"; now this reader considers that the man puts his monarchic fetish on display, that this is also a metaphor for public life, and (a well read reader) that in Zamyatin's anti-Stalin, dystopic novel We, the characters lived in glass apartments, a metaphor for Stalin's own monarchic power fetish. Clearly, this simple statement has already provoked a good bit of interpretation. The joke continues: "a man collected thrones, and he lived in a glass house; one day a particularly heavy throne that was stored in his attic broke through the floor, and continuing its fall destroyed the whole house." The writing reader interprets: "it is not surprising that monarchic greed should lead to destruction, a lesson of history," or, perhaps, "a public figure should not be so subservient to a fetish." These negative overtones are suggested by the term "attic" which carries a negative psychological load. The response of a naive reader at this point may simply be: too bad this man had so much trouble, but what is the point?

Here the punch line arrives in the form of a moral to this story: "people who live in glass houses should not stow

thrones." Now this joke has arrived at closure; since it is complete, the naive reader understands its "point," a silly reversal of the proverb "people who live in glass houses should not throw stones." This joke provides a model of discourse following a story's closure; this is also an expressionistic model since it is divided into "story" and "lesson" segments where ordinarily the "lesson" or discourse is left for the reader to discover after having gotten the complete story. Still, expressionism in this joke goes much deeper. The original proverb suggests that vulnerable people should not be arrogant, and this extends to public figures not being unnecessarily judgmental. The punch line of the joke, however, conveys a similar discourse to the proverb, since there is a kind of arrogance in public figures with monarchic fetishes. Two things ought to be noted that the naive reader may miss: 1) in spite of the silly reversal of terms, a similar discourse is conveyed both by the proverb and the joke; this emphasizes how language can be determined by reference, that a, perhaps "vertical," quality of language continues to convey a meaning in spite of a deformity of the utterance (an effect familiar to readers of Joyce and Pynchon); and 2) the writing reader does not require the punchline of the joke to get its discourse; by presenting the joke in bits, it is clear where the discourse begins to achieve a definition through image.

If collecting things is not particularly ominous, although it may be read that way (Fowles' The Collector), collecting thrones does carry an ominous political load in a democratic context, and stowing the thrones in a glass house sets the stage for disaster, since glass associates not only some form of clarity but also fragility. Although the discourse may not be completely transparent without full disclosure, much of it is conveyed well before closure occurs. The writing reader does not really need to hear about the house falling down, for this is almost inevitable from the initial images. If this reader does not hear the punchline, the connection to the proverb with its overtones may be missed, but most of the discourse contained in these initial images will have been conveyed, so this reader will get most of the "point" or discourse of this joke from only hearing the first half.

Both Hillman and Benjamin recognize that the image presents more than its surface seems to present, not only a picture but also a "perception," and this recognition is fundamental to understanding the image contact. Taken together, Hillman's idealist analysis and Benjamin's materialist analysis form a theoretical synthesis of the broadest sort. The basic character of the aesthetic image, because of its presentation of large quantities of information, is inherently metatextual and innately discursive, since discourse is metatext. The praxis of the

recognition or denial of these qualities distinguishes the respective types of discourse: expressionism or naturalism. Naturalism insists that the image is merely mimetic, an imitation of the real, and through this insistence seeks to control discourse by enforcing its dependence upon closure. Expressionism on the other hand, calls attention to the discursive qualities of the image, often by breaking mimetic conventions to provoke questioning and discursive participation by its audience throughout the course of its presentation, not just when closure has been achieved. Strategies of definite and indefinite images and of textual arrays (discussed below) are expressionistic devices which provoke the discursive participation of the audience.

The complexity of image presentation leads to shock, and Benjamin insists that shock "should be cushioned by a heightened presence of mind" ("Mechanical Reproduction" 238). His work precedes that of Ong and McLuhan, but all three of them recognize the theoretical importance of the manner in which aesthetic presentations impact upon psychic structures to produce meaning. The material image raises consciousness through its discursive qualities which promote the recognition of this image as a representation of consciousness itself, instead of as a false projection of an objective closure. To this extent, its reception is intuitive, but any form of explication of this intuitive construct requires a rhetorical discourse for description,

and this discursive character promotes the continuation of discourse, which cannot be subjected to closure. The material image resists closure because it signifies only discursive options, rather than some strict, referential correspondence as do other allegorical tropes (I and II).

This discursiveness enhances the context of the image, inviting comparison among similar images, which, in turn, promotes more discourse. This inherent discursiveness of the image inhibits direct transmission of images by deforming images throughout successive rhetorical incarnations. Rene Girard traced image patterns in successive incarnations of stories, such as the myth of Oedipus and Sophocles' drama about the myth, and he discovered shifts of emphasis occured from the mythic version to its revision: "the extent of the poet's understanding of the myth and its origins is hard to ascertain, but it does not have to be complete for tragedy to represent a progress in the direction of mythical dismantling" (Violence and the Sacred 84). Subtle differences become much more pronounced when image severs the contextual connection between the image and tradition; this will be an important aspect of the second part of this study. Image discourse also integrates scientific and aesthetic thought by providing a common context; the rhetorical distillation of a particular image from an intuitive field becomes a common practice for both artists

and scientists, as aethetic constructs and as models, respectively. Girard's careful attention to images provides a sound basis for scientific hypothesis, but this is only to cite one example in a whole range of converging discourses. Images also surmount barriers between parties who use different languages; this is also indicative of their metalinguistic, metatextual character.

The material image, like image in montage, is cut off from tradition, so any connections to other texts need to be established through its own image presentation, and such connections are relatively frequent. Expressionistic texts make clear these intertextual connections through allusive strategies, such as textual arrays, by means of the close resemblance of common images. Image media are often exploited through the assertion that the image is only surface. Such an assertion makes the image into a naturalist signifier by providing a false closure and by masking its discursive qualities.

This enforced sense of closure is what occurs with respect to aesthetic transcendence, or the appeal to the sublime. Consider Eliot's use of the untranslatable Sanskrit word "shantih" to end <u>The Waste Land</u>. The sublime is invoked as a metatextual realm providing a transcendent source for meaning, but the use of this indefinite image as a signifier for such a transcendence literally has no referent because this image is already a self-referential

metatext. While it may generate further discourse concerning its significance, it cannot reference anything beyond its own image. The use of this word is a device to invest this poem with authorial distance, an aura. This device accords with other devices in this poem, such as the formal footnotes which connect his poem to other, more traditional works, after the manner of Milton. Gestures like Eliot's here constitute the "modernist" form of expressionism in which self-referentiality garners support from traditional sources. Eliot's poem "The Hollow Men," on the other hand, suggests a more contemporary expressionism. In the "postmodernist" forms of expressionism, allusions or arrays develop with respect to non-traditional sources, suggesting an anti-traditional discursive agreement.

Hutcheon credits Benjamin's essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" with a kind of "prophecy" regarding the postmodern; this may be the result of a complicity with a widespread tendency to date a postmodern "period," either as post-1945 or post-1960.[3.2] This kind of chronological thought contributes to the difficulties of understanding just what constitutes "modernist" practice when "modernism" is used as a descriptive term to lump together the widely divergent aesthetic movements of the early twentieth century. Benjamin witnessed the emergence of a "postmodern" aesthetic movement from "modernist" practice among his own

contemporaries, and, although he did not use the term "postmodern" or the term "expressionism" in the general sense that it is developed here, his essay is the most important contribution to the synthesis of specific parameters of postmodern practice.[3.3] Hillman has also contributed significantly, as well as others, to this elaboration of "postmodern" parameters:

1) political relations, not the sublime or the beautiful, become the fundamental justification of expressionistic art;

2) expressionism is a fundamentally discursive approach, so story becomes less crucial to expressionistic discourse, unlike naturalism where discourse arises from story;

3) the means of representation in expressionism is the material image, and cinema as a mode of production possesses a basically expressionist character;

4) reception of expressionistic art involves participation through speculation for an audience of producers;

5) metatextuality, criticism, subjectivism, and illustrations or visual presentations function as marks of expressionistic discourse, and these elements are usually overdetermined when a particular work is designated as expressionistic;

6) ideological stances often are clearly recognizable in expressionism because of its rhetorical and political orientation, not mysterious or speculative (even though actual signification in expressionism usually requires speculative participation, cf. "4"), and, consequently, no part of an expressionistic text is exempt from ideological treatment;
7) in expressionism meaning is coded through an indefinite allegory (one image leads to another) as opposed to naturalism in which traditional forms of allegory (one-to-one or symbolic correspondence) produce meaning. The material image provokes an intuitive, virtual complex of meaning. From this field a specific discourse is refined through rhetorical praxis.[3.4]

The Image-Genre Matrix

Since the material image emphasizes both surface and discourse, other allegorical forms of images can be approached through its domain, but these other forms cannot encompass the material image within their logical fields. One understands that a word can be viewed as an image of itself (an understanding which provokes image strategies discussed in the previous part, "the image of text"), but a

word generally is characterized by its reference function in that it combines with other words to produce discourse or to produce image. By itself a word can only generate an image of the most abstract and indefinite sort: "car" lacks the specificity usually attributed to images, including autos, railroad types, toys, and so on. A word requires some context to function like an image, in that an image produces discourse.

A symbol may also be viewed as an image of itself, but a symbol functions as a closed construct, with a specifically limited discourse; for example, a word may be called a symbol with an understanding that a word signifies some sort of referent, a discourse, if you will, but one limited to the function of a word, albeit in a general sense. A more complex elaboration of word as a symbol limits it discourse to several functions (literal, allegorical, moral, even anagogic), but these all still delineate a limited discursive field in which the symbol, unlike the image, serves a discursive purpose, instead of being a source of discourse, generating a variety of meanings, which is the function of an image.

Since the material image can contain these forms, word and symbol, within its functional discursiveness, it provides a common medium for classification of images. Moreover, the image possesses a potential for the integration of generic categories. Ong describes some of

the genres of verbal art affected by "the shift from orality to literacy": "lyric, narrative, descriptive discourse, oratory, drama, philosophical and scientific works, historiography, and biography" (139). He then chooses narrative as his topic, but he also adds "drama, which, while it presents action with no narrative voice, still has a story line, as narrative does." Ong discusses novels a great deal in his study, but here he subsumes the novel within "narrative." His method here, while both precise and valid, indirectly shows the difficulties involved with generic classification, because in order to discuss plotting he must select genres which tend to contain plot, and his discursive concentration must be theoretically applied across genres. Although the presentation of story is a fundamental aspect of literature, generic categories are not described with reference to the presentation of story, even though "narrative" appears to be organized about this very presentation of story. "Narrative" is not sufficiently inclusive; perhaps "novel" is not mentioned here because the case that all novels tell stories is not so easily made, and only those novels which do tell stories are subsumed within narrative. Ong's theoretical works cuts across generic lines because those genres have not been organized along theoretical principles so much as traditionally rhetorical ones, so different classifications become coextensive with respect to particular qualities.

The material image can provide an integrative approach to genre organization which can prioritize the discursive qualities of images as generic tendencies as well as sort generic images according to surface presentations. Variations of styles could be compared with respect to the kinds of images produced in those styles, and emphasis on particular kinds of images could characterize the discursive directions of particular products. Unlike Ong, who must decide whether to discuss "historiography" with regard to narrative, one could approach theoretical problems at a level of generic organization which would be coherent with respect to accomplished theoretical practice. This kind of an integrative field is set forth as an image-genre grid, or matrix (below), and its formative parameters will be the next subject of discussion.

This study has been at pains to point out the correlations between major forms of production and their typical forms of discourse: orality as a typically monological discourse expressed through the epic, writing as dialogical discourse expressed through the novel, and cinematic as expressionistic discourse, both dialogical and metatextual, presented through film or an equivalent text of images. Bakhtin's discernment of temporality as a crucial distinguishing feature between monological and dialogical discourse accords well with the analysis of images since images occupy time and space. If monological discourse

rhetorically emphasizes the past and if dialogical discourse rhetorically emphasizes the present, cannot this formula be extended to consider expressionistic discourse as rhetorically emphasizing the future?

Hillman has suggested that the image is characterized by rhetoric (above), but futurity has a double rhetorical function. First, the use of a future scenario, or a utopian presentation, actually rhetorically emphasizes certain aspects of present temporality. This rhetorical selection is very much a metatextual strategy, for the dialogue of the present becomes refined into a probabalistic projection much like a scientific hypothesis, and such hypotheses themselves constitute metatext. This metatextual emphasis accords with expressionistic discourse. Second, rhetorical presentation of futurity can be prophetic in that its future may actually come to pass.

The possibility of writing prophecy is controversial, but if one accepts the possibility that it can happen in a philosophical qualification (such as, induction cannot show conclusively that prophecy cannot occur), then a rhetorical category for prophecy possesses some validity. Certainly, there are texts that lay strong claims to prophetic writing, so such a category is less a matter of speculation than it is a real problem of literary analysis. Expressionistic discourse does not exclude the rhetorical possibility of prophecy; indeed, religious texts containing prophecy, like

mystical texts, are largely considered as a form of expressionism. Expressionistic discourse can accommodate both aspects of rhetorical futurity (see also Chapter Five, under "Future Genres"). These two types of futurity are also distinguished by their real and unreal contexts, as rational projection and as more indeterminate forms of prophecy, for if prophecy does come to pass it becomes history; its nature as prophecy is only valid before the event.

Earlier in this discussion it was shown how images could be categorized by their real or unreal contexts, and the temporal categories of past, present, and future are all consistent with real and unreal spatial worlds. Using these three discourses typical of the major modes of production as three axes of categorization (it has already been shown how print media breaks into both dialogical and expressionistic discourses), one can sort the discourses indicated by their image presentation into a three-dimensional generic field. Such a field can represent both existing genres as well as theoretically possible ones, so the field can demonstrate valid rhetorical categories which may not yet have been realized as text. Practically, though, most categories have exemplary texts, if not many (see part two of this study). This integrative theoretical field can instruct more precisely about the nature of genre than have past methods of rhetorically sorting text production. Although methods

of analyzing production should also to lead to a precise theoretical organization, since the inductive method is supported by actual production, past systems have not been based on sufficiently inclusive parameters. This inductive formula of organizing genres by image type and by discourse type is accomplished by assigning a discursive value to the temporal-production category of the presented image and by distinguishing real and unreal image presentations as spatial-temporal categories. This scheme is set out below:

		UNREAL IMAGE SPACE		REAL IMAGE SPACE	
REAL TIME	Past	Ghost tales	+	Historical Accounts	+
(Historical)	(Oral)	Fairy Tales	--	Folk Tales	–
	Present	Romance	+	History and Realism	+
	(Verbal)	Fantastic	–	Satire	–
	Future	Science Fantasy	+	Science Fiction	+
	(Image)	Surrealism	–	Tragicomedy	–
UNREAL TIME	Past	Mythology	+	Heroic Legends	+
(Absolute)	(Oral)	Dreams	–	Auguries	–
	Present	Dreams (Jungian)	+	Dreams (Freudian)	+
	(Verbal)	Black Fantasy	–	Black Humor	–
	Future	Prophecy	+	Projection (dêja vu)	+
	(Imagist)	Tarot	–	I Ching	–

FIGURE 3. IMAGE-GENRE GRID

This is a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional generic matrix in which spatial-temporal axes are arrayed with respect to a discursive axis. This configuration shows lines of generic development, and the generic categories integrates all forms of textuality.

This matrix is read as follows: the ground state of the image plane (discourse = zero) can be viewed in two ways. The first takes this image grid as pre-representational or as a priori images; this accords with Vico's proposition that literature invests pre-existent forms with irony (Vico 301). This ironic investment correlates with oral production; in fact, it is likely that forms of production and discourse can be configured with respect to the trope of irony as well as that of allegory used in this study (Chambers and Hutcheon both discuss the role of irony in the production of discourse).

The other approach simply views this ground state as equivalent to oral production, commonly considered as zero-degree narration to designate its discursive limitations. In this case Vico's pre-representational forms literally "zero-out," and the grid considers only forms of actual representation. The four naturalistic categories generated by oral production include: ghost tales, historical accounts, mythology, and heroic legends. These genres correspond to other, generic forms of "oral expressionism," including fairy tales, folk tales, dreams and auguries.

The next step up the discursive axis corresponds to verbal production which produces the relatively naturalistic categories of romance, realism and history (including contemporary nonfiction), Freudian dreams, and Jungian dreams. Here a discursive value of one corresponds to dialogical presentation. Here a couple of clarifications will be helpful. First, the distinction between Freudian dreams and Jungian dreams is made on the basis of the images presented in them. Frued showed that many, but not all dreams are based on wishes and develop their imagery from "everyday," mundane objects and occurrences. Jung's discussion of dreams which present archetypal, often unreal, images elucidates dreams for which Freud's system could not account; these are different dreams, dreams not at all easily characterized by a wish as a source. As a matter of frequency, Jungian dreams are much rarer than Fruedian dreams, which occur very frequently, and, also, Jungian dreams are characterized by a high degree of vividness. Second, one should recognize the relative character of naturalistic genres generated within an unreal temporality; in other words, naturalistic and expressionistic qualities are blended within such contexts. Corresponding to these "naturalistic," dialogical genres, there are more expressionistic ones as well. Expressionistic, dialogical production generates the categories of the fantastic (after Todorov, also early forms of surrealism allied to the gothic

are characterized as fantastic), satire, black fantasy, and black humor.

A discursive value of two here corresponds to metatextual discourse typified by image production and emphasis on forms of future temporality. These generic categories are all relatively expressionistic in character, but "naturalistic" trends can be followed within them. These relatively naturalistic genres include science fiction, science fantasy (the SF genres), prophecy, and projection (projection is characterized by "deja vu" as opposed to "prediction" which is associated with science fiction). More thoroughly expressionistic generic correspondences to these genres include surrealism, tragicomedy, and prophetic machines, typified by Tarot and I Ching. A more detailed discussion of these future image forms takes place in Chapter Five ("Future Genres").

These generic categories indicate the typical discourses associated with specific forms of production. These categories also possess an aggregate character: for example, verbal production tends to include not only its special forms but also previous oral forms presented verbally. Also, Ong's famous phenomenon of "secondary orality" situates particular qualities of orality within essentially imagist presentations (this accounts for the sometimes "monological" power focused through the image and for the less "formal" qualities of image presentation as

compared with verbal production). This model shows a historical sensitivity in that these discursive forms can occur at any time, but the production of typical forms tends to correspond to the historical period in which particular production forms dominate. The "+" and "-" signs have been arbitrarily used to designate naturalist ("+") and expressionistic ("-") approaches within each discursive category.

This matrix provides helpful conclusions about generic properties. The category of science fiction develops along with the broad trend toward expressionism in the nineteenth century as exemplified by works of Poe, Wells, and Mary Shelley. The development of dream texts also comes about at this time, typified by Poe and De Quincey (this will be developed at more length shortly). Unreal images of the past tend to be associated with religious discourse while verbal use focuses more on the nature of psychic structures, and imagist unreality invokes form of futurity. Taken together, these generic movements provide an index of shifting religious attitudes toward secularism (see also chapter five, "general conclusions").

These categories provide a formal organization with a "built-in" flexibility, so the allegorical tropes typical of production forms which distinguish naturalism (allegory I and II) and expressionism (allegory III) may be applied to any category, while each particular category reveals its

innate discursive qualities. As stated above, the classification of any particular work should depend upon a discursive overdetermination. The specific categories of oral production tend to focus more on the nature of an objective world, and those of the verbal and the imagist (or "cinematic") more clearly provide a discourse of consciousness. Thus, one may conclude that verbal production eventually began to undermine the objective mimesis projected by oral cultures and long reinforced by verbal formality, when verbal production began to concentrate on the production of images.

The usefulness of this combination of rhetorical temporalities, image types, and production discourses is two-fold. First, this matrix provides strong suggestions concerning formal categories while it integrates all forms of cultural production. Second, it provides a clear basis for its own reorganization and further development of generic inquiry. This matrix both helps to explain important features of contemporary culture by specifying structures previously lumped under critical catch-alls (the "absurd," the "postmodern," the "nouveau" incarnations, and so on) and by providing direction for further theoretical formulations. This matrix conserves the importance of structure because it operates out of the material text, using surface characteristics for classification (remember that in expressionism the surface tends to be discursive),

but it also avoids linear rigidity through its recognition of the relative character of trends and through its flexible specifications. These evidential qualities help to alleviate controversies. Also, this matrix promotes sensitivity to the operant rules of specific discourses as a guide to interpretation.

Dream Texts

The image-genre grid displays certain paradoxical qualities. First, only some of the genres actually represent achieved literary forms; others are experiential, and some, as in the cases of divination systems, a mixture of both. This empirical representation of literary production accepts "mimetic" representation in that literary production attempts the representation of some form of "reality," likely as perceived consciousness, but, paradoxically, the generic areas designated as "experiential" are actually forms of subjectively experienced "unreality" (like dreams and deja vu). Such representations take on their own form through the languages of either words or images, and, in turn, they are modified by a variety of contacts. Perhaps it is best to consider the image-genre matrix as forms of (con)textual contact, possible forms of "elaborated" consciousness, or, more generally acknowledged, as forms of mediation. In any case,

it remains an advantage that generic products are ordered by forms of contact that entail specific discursive features, allowing access to interpretative values.

Second, many more of these genres contain expressionistic tendencies than naturalistic ones. Indeed, from this perspective, the naturalistic strategy of direct representation of reality is relatively restricted to real-time oral genres and to naturalistic verbal genres; that is, some forms of monological and dialogical discourse. The rest of these genres either display expressionistic tendencies or some stronger degree of expressionistic production such that there are generic areas where the representational impulse begins as an expressionistic one and permits of further expressionistic development; thus, all forms of imagist representation involve expressionism.

Third, any form of verbal production, dialogic, or novelistic discourse not strictly naturalistic involves the literal production of some kind of dream text. Further, all forms of imagist production are visionary. It has been mentioned before that Derrida considers all forms of mimetic production as a kind of dream (see Chapter One), but this analysis of textual effects displayed in the image-genre grid allows for the naturalistic "fantasy" of actual reproduction of the real for the practical purpose of describing productive values. Moreover, the concept of distinct spatial-temporalities with regard to the material

image provides something of an index to indeterminacy. It has been acknowledged from the outset that the material image is only a plastic (to varying degrees determinable) rhetorical condensation or distillation of a relatively indeterminate virtual image complex and that distinct fields of unreal spatiality and unreal temporality provide descriptions of stages of indeterminacy as "genres" and more or less indeterminate impulses within such genres.

A major advantage of this image genre grid is its recognition of the aesthetically limited strategies of generic development within naturalistic representation. More traditional systems have sought to constrain aesthetic production within this relatively narrow field, although a great deal of variation could occur with respect to strategies of naturalist presentation. Traditional systems valued aesthetic qualities based on the degree of verisimilitude, but, as has been shown above, this verisimilitude itself results from the investment of an aesthetic distance lending perspective, and this is equivalent to the aura.

While there has been a lot of talk about the aesthetic "possibilities" or the "potentional" of the "avant-garde," this grid attempts a description and elaboration of specific strategies of discourse, areas of generic development, which are not based on a beautiful semblance to the real, but which flood the real with unreality. Expressionistic

representation stands apart from naturalism, in a sense, turning it on its head by insisting on a subjective grounding of representation. Productive values with a non-natural foundation are arrayed in this image matrix allowing the specification of a variety of expressionistic stances and providing a base for comparison of stylistic strategies once lumped into the realms of the "experimental" or the "unsuccessful," depending on the generosity of critics. One might well ask about generic boundaries, such as whether real and unreal spatial-temporal ranges or domains actually merge, and so on, but, if they do, it is clearly in the direction of indeterminacy as far as representation goes, and, more importantly, for purposes of classification, they tend not to merge, but the more extreme forms of expressionism increase indeterminacy. This discussion of margins with respect to these representational trends will be further developed with respect to the indefinite and definite image (below and in Volume Two of this study). Using this image-genre grid, one ought to be able to assign an image strategy to a generic area, and, with careful consideration, one ought to determine an aggregate of image strategies within a specific work to follow a particular discursive direction or pathway.

For many works a preponderance of discourse in a particular direction will determine classification; for example, Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow not only contains a

variety of expressionistic image strategies but also highly precise mathematical descriptions, a sine qua non of naturalistic presentation. However, the radical blocks that Pynchon has prepared to prevent linear elucidation, not the least of which involves the innovation of the "disappearing protagonist," have the effect of recontextualizing his mathematical presentations (there are also "unreal" forms of mathematics), and these become almost unrecognizable within his chaos of representational forms. Indeed, little enough attention has been paid by critics to the mathematical equations presented by Pynchon; this is probably a shortcoming of specialization by critics for whom mathematics is far afield from their areas of preparation, where their qualification is problematic.

It might fairly be said that extreme expressionism reveals the indeterminacy underlying all expression, but that it is the suggestion of the real, the chance or possibility of presence which creates the indeterminate (this is fundamental to the concept of definite and indefinite images). A similar conclusion has been reached by McHoul and Wills in their discussion of meaning as transference (131-62). The major writers addressed by this study, Kafka and Beckett, are both involved in the production of dream texts; that is, they work in generic areas which have much in common with dreams, and their representation involves the presentation of dreams and

expression concerning dreams, although they at times achieve other effects.

Traditionally, the representation of dreams in literature is placed in a controversial context, that of a subjective illusion, but those dreams which are represented tend to come about, and this opens a discourse which considers subjectivity as a base for representation. This problem is expressionistically presented by Chaucer in his "Nun's Priest's Tale"; in the discussion between Chauntecleer and Pertelote concerning the validity of dreams, Chauntecleer argues for the validity of dreams while Pertelote insists they are illusions. Many examples of true dreams are cited, including that of this tale itself, but the whole effect works toward a naturalistic acceptance of dreams, if they are true ones, but there is little sympathy for the illusory qualities of dreams.

Many of these illusory qualities probably possess validity, but the coding of dream language is different, and the difficulties of extracting a discourse from the indeterminate images of dreams have been considered all but insurmountable. Metz's 1975 semiotic study on the relation of dreams to film illustrated some of these difficulties:

> it is before such [narrative] dreams that the spectator adopts a very particular <u>visee de conscience</u> which is confounded neither with that of the dream, nor with that of the daydream, nor with that of real perception, but which retains a little of all three, and is installed, so to speak, at the center of the triangle that they mark out . . . If films which are not <u>at all</u>

> narrative (there are in fact rather few of these) should one day become more numerous and persuasive, the first effect of this evolution would be to dismiss, at a single stroke, the threefold play of reality, dream, and phantasy ("The Fiction Film" [1975] 101-2).

Metz's conclusions developed the differences between these forms, but he also recognized the remarkable similarities between the real, the film image, the dream, and fantasy. Eventually, Metz himself opted for these similarities and the relation of Freudian structures to film theory (see Psychoanalysis and Cinema, 1982).

Nevertheless, a consideration of Metz's distinctions between these forms tends to destabilize his elaborated differences between them, which he eventually realized. First, "the first and principle difference between the filmic and oneiric situations" involves knowledge in that the dreamer does not know he is dreaming while the spectator knows he is at the movies (75). This objection is relativized by the case of the lucid dreamer who knows that he is dreaming. Metz asserts that this "almost never" happens, but, in fact, it happens more and more frequently. Anyone who pays attention to their dreams for a sufficient time and whose dreams are not characterized by obsessions (recurrent dreams indicate an ego resistance to dream material) will move into an appreciation of their dreams as they occur; in other words the lucid dream becomes the rule rather than the exception. In such cases the acts of

falling asleep or of going to the movies take on a much greater equivalence.

Second, "filmic perception is a real perception (is really a perception); it is not reducible to an internal psychic process" (80). Here Metz encountered many difficulties, because the objective-subjective dichotomy is invoked to instill difference. Perception of a film is perception of a representation, just as is reading a book, but different media produce the images (of words or of pictures). The perception of an object produced by another can only be more of a perception than an image produced by oneself in a dream because of its material existence, but this condition relegates self-perception to the status of illusion, no matter how accurate such perception may be. The achievement of a linguistic "certainty" with respect to the objective must yield up any "certainty" with respect to the subjective, even though both make claims to accuracy. Paintings and photographs are envisioned by their creators before they come to be finished works; such creative previsioning is as much a perception for these artists as is their perception of other photographs or paintings: here similarities tend to overrun differences. Another problem involves perception itself, for is not perception a representation produced by the senses, and are not dreams representations produced by those same senses? The eye whether it is open or closed will still see (see below,

"Dream Theories": Bergson). This problem of perception as representation is the whole point of Samuel Beckett's Film (discussed at length in Chapter Five). One cannot presume that it only requires an objective focus for perception to be valid. Consider the varieties of interpretive readings and misprisions of a particular text where the same object produces many different perceptions (as can the instructions for assembling a bicycle; imagine trusting the directions for operating a motor vehicle to a text). This objective view of perception is invalidated by the indeterminate nature of any particular perception being characterized as true or as illusory; indeed much critical quibbling takes this form.

Third, Metz argued that "the diegetic [narrative] film is in general considerably more "'logical'" and "'constructed'" than the dream (88). Again, this is really an extension of the objective-subjective dichotomy to presume that a demonstrated logic, like geometry, is superior to the logic of dreams. The comfort taken in the known "object" confers a superiority over a logic developed by the dreamer of and for himself. Metz characterized dream logic as "truly alien" when, in fact, it is the most intimate form of logic (89). It is likely that dream logic is always understood by the dreamer, for whom the dream is a particular message. The difficulties arise in translating this dream logic into the logical systems of linear

language. Nonetheless, Freud (who is the major source for Metz's metapsychology) succeeded to a large extent in making this translation (see the next section on dream theories). Also, Freud's discussion of how dreams are constructed does not imply that they are any less constructed than texts; there are, after all, political censors equivalent to psychic censors (Metz later comes around to this in Psychoanalysis and Cinema).

Fourth, Metz insisted upon the special origin of images: the dreaming subject who passes "from the dream to the filmic state" can only lose because "the images are not his" (98). This statement can only have a partial accuracy. At the level of a cultural archetype, images are held in commom. This is the basis for the concept of the material image: that image representations in cultural products partake of this archetypal quality. Freud's "Oedipus," for example, is characterized by its universal quality; differences may exist between it and that of the myth or the play, but these differences are fairly trivial with respect to the figure itself. Further, this image or figure itself generates discourse more than it is the object of discourse, because as an archetype it is only an approximation which requires a rhetorical refinement. The intertextual strategy of the textual array (see below) is a device by which authors share images indicative of a common discourse in which they are engaged; these correspondences are not exact,

but they are indicative of a common endeavor. The attempt to distance the image, to specify its originality with respect to authorship, to authority, in short, is a reification, a reinvestment of the image with an aura, an exercise in cultural nostalgia.

Metz's argument locates many areas where difference between dreams and film may be sought, and he discovers many similarities between them as well. This study has been at such pains to critique Metz's older argument, to show how his differences become problematized and destabilized into relative continuities, in order to show how linear thought can fail at the appreciation of its object, not to discredit Metz's thoughtful endeavor. The basis for Metz's argument lies in the discursive category of "narrative." For Metz the essential difference between dreams and film was found in their respective narrative contexts, and his elaboration followed from this distinction. It has already been shown how "narrative" fails Ong in his elaboration of cultural contacts. This is why the image-genre grid functions at the level of the image itself by treating all images as valid representations which provoke discourse. The generic quality of a given work is described with respect to the kinds of images presented in the work.

In fact, this matrix began as an attempt to elaborate conventions of fantastic literature, but in developing its focus on representations, it became clear that any

representations, of oral, of verbal, or of cinematic images formed basic units of discourse allowing for precise classifications without requiring unwieldy discursive structures. In this way, one can recognize that Metz's "evolution" of the synthesis of dream and of film does not require aesthetic production of largely non-narrative forms so much as it requires a discursive turning away from the category of "narrative" as a principle premise for literary analysis and a turning toward "representation" as a more self-evident perspective on literary production. Expressionism, with its metatextual use of the image, provokes discourse both through narrative and non-narrative forms. Expressionism represents the dream, constructed verbally or cinematically, as text, dismantling the projected distinctions between them.

This study develops an analysis of the forms of the material image found in dream texts, definite and indefinite images, and considers how these images constitute generic areas and approaches, making possible stylistic comparisons and analyses in a more effective way than has been forthcoming with regard to the distinct styles of some writers, particularly Kafka and Beckett. Before proceeding to the demonstration and application of this generic method, it may be helpful to consider some parameters of dreams and their unreal effects.

Dream Theories

Freud's study of dreams as contained in The Interpretation of Dreams provides important theories and data about the dreaming process. His theory that dreams are engendered by wishes not only holds for many dreams, but it also provides a common theoretical ground that unites much of traditional and modern dream interpretation. His discussion of dream wishes and anxiety explains how manifest dream content becomes oppositional to the dream wish; this has also been a tenet of traditional dream interpretation in that many dreams should be interpreted in senses opposite to their literal content (Freud 193, 270, 619-23; 508). Dreams involving sexual concerns illustrate this tendency in that direct sexual content in dreams often masks concerns other than sexual ones. In fact, often an apparent absence of sexual content indicates a dream of sexual nature, for example, examination dreams, while a broad development of sexuality in a dream may indicate more pedestrian concerns, for example, an examination (Freud 310 [examinations], 403-5 [staircases], 432-435 [disguised sexuality]).

An important implication of dream temporality also arises from Freud's study in that some event provokes the dream, and, in turn, the dream provokes the dreamer to some action, if only the recognition of an affect (97, 197-202; 497-99). The conception that an event "real" or psychic

(like a "random encounter" or a wish) provokes the dream suggests that dreams themselves are reactive phenomena connected to our perceptions (or representations) of the world and of ourselves. That these "events" are more or less indeterminate does little to prove their irrelevance with respect to dreams when dreams themselves often quite readily divulge aspects of real events within the dream presentation. Freud took great pains to demonstrate the importance of such connections, and he also studied how dream presentations portray logical operations; again, the real elements of logic have their place in dreams as well (345-53).

Kafka's story "In The Penal Colony" becomes much less inscrutable within this context, as a dreamed response to a psychic event. "The Judgment" also presents a classic anxiety dream, although when viewed as a story alone, it seems incredible. The degree of determination of a dream over subsequent events is certainly variable, and even debatable, but, nonetheless, it is more certain that some behavior will follow the dream and that knowledge of the dream is part of the context of this behavior (even though such behavior may only be a thought). Freud also detailed certain dream symbols; for example, a staircase symbolizes copulation, and a staircase has significance in Kafka's "Cares of a Family Man." Part of this detailing of symbols involves dream terrain where a forest may represent the

body's pubic region, a hill the breast, and so on. These elements of Freud's theory of dreams are highly significant in literary representations. Indeed, it was often to literature that Freud went to explicate dream theory, and the Freudian school of literary interpretation often makes use of these symbols.

Jung developed the archetypal theory of dream interpretation; this theory differs from Freud, but so do the dreams which are subjected to interpretation by this theory:

> For Freud, accordingly [to denoting the unconscious as the state of repressed or forgotten contents], the unconscious is of an exclusively personal nature, although he was aware of its archaic and mythological thought-forms. A more or less superficial layer of the unconscious is undoubtedly personal. I call it the <u>personal unconscious</u>. But this personal unconscious rests upon a deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn. This deeper layer I call the <u>collective unconscious</u>. . . . The contents of the personal unconscious are chiefly the <u>feeling-toned complexes</u>, as they are called; they constitute the personal and private side of psychic life. The contents of the collective unconscious, on the other hand, are known as <u>archetypes</u> (<u>Four Archetypes</u> 3-4).

Archetypal dreams are rarer occurences in the life of the dreamer than are Freud's everyday "wish-fulfillment" dreams, but for Jung it is problematic to systematize dreams:

> owing to the diversity of the symbolical material it is difficult at first to perceive any kind of order at all. Nor should it be taken for granted that dream sequences are subject to any governing principle" (<u>Psychology and Alchemy</u> 28).

This concept of the archetype, presented by Jung and further developed by Hillman, is directly involved with the development of the material image which allows a revisioning of text production, a revisioning which calls for recognition of the importance of dreams in literature. Archetypes are also common in literature, although they may not be considered strictly as symbols since they are inherently less determinate than symbols and since they refer to aspects of individuation in the personality. On the whole, it seems better to consider Freud's and Jung's theories of dreams as aggregate; that is, each explains well the type of dream appropriate to each theory. This consideration is more effective than the conflictual attitude concerning which theory is "correct." In literary production, Melville has been shown to be amenable to archetypal analysis, and this study will discuss in detail archetypal analysis in Kafka's work: for example, Gregor's metamorphosis into a "dung beetle" (the maid's version) invokes the archetype of the scarab, a powerful occult structure (see chapter four).

In addition, Henri Bergson made a study of dreams which emphasizes the precision with which the imagination produces dreams through the physical medium of the sleeping, "unseeing" eye. Recalling Benjamin's remarks on the reception of film art as shock and as a "habit of distraction" provides insight into the signifying power of

film, for distracted persons not only perceive what is presented to them, but other things as well. Benjamin suggests that shock requires a heightened presence of mind. Of course, dreams also provide the shock effect, and it may be that Bergson's theory of dreams contributed to Benjamin's "aesthetics of distraction" in cinema, providing a precedent to the synthesis of dream and of cinematic representations. In "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," Benjamin shows his acquaintance with the theories of Bergson (160). Benjamin also may be referring to Bergson's material analysis in Dreams (1914):

> to sleep is to become disinterested . . . in the dream the same faculties are exercised as during waking, but they are in a state of tension in the one case, and of relaxation in the other . . . the memories which it gathers most readily are the memories of relaxation and distraction, those which do not bear the mark of effort (48, 50, 55).

One can easily see how the inward movement of surrealism and of Benjamin's appreciation of cinema coheres with this effortless, distracted aesthetic, as well as how hostilely more traditional aesthetes would view this turn (as Metz once did, above). In the first place, the subjective field was considered additional to the field of mimetic objectivity, but now it is becoming clear that the subjective field has swallowed whole the objective one. One can still speak of an outside, but only on the qualified terms of a projection.

This is part of the reason why Kafka's writing is so deeply affective, for the subjectivity that his writing explores directly affects that of his readers. This represents the fulfillment of expressionist art, realized most particularly in Kafka when the text conjoins the subjectivity of the writer with that of the reader in a dark dance of speculation, an effortless immersion in a huge oneiric field of representation. Words provide an entry to this territory, but words cannot encompass this space. Later, an examination of how Welles uses the vehicle of the dream to bring about Kafka's expressionist fiat in his cinematic adaptation of The Trial will not only provide evidence of Welles' recognition of the dream in Kafka but also of Welles' inclusion of deja vu as a dream device which can structure narrative (see Chapter Four).

The collective impact of these dream theories can help to explain a difficult phenomenon like deja vu. This, along with other prophetic dreams, was denied by Freud because it could only awkwardly fit within his theory of dream as wish-fulfillment. However, the phenomenon of deja vu makes sense as a dream phenomenon: some event sparks a dream, the dream content is exactly a future event, elaborated in minute detail; eventually, the dreamer comes to this event and is overpowered by the memory of the dream which predicted it, for it has truly been "already seen." For Freud, "the ancient belief that dreams foretell the future is not wholly

devoid of truth," but he believed the temporal connection was accomplished by the wish which transmitted the image of the past into the future (660). Freud's understanding of landscapes in dreams that produced the feeling of deja vu was that they "are invariably the genitals of the dreamer's mother; there is indeed no other place about which one can assert with such conviction that one has been there once before" (435). Although Freud offers convincing evidence that such an explanation for this phenomenon is probably appropriate at times, notably, the transmission of affect in dreams ("affects have remained unaltered" [498]), one wonders if there are not cases where the place remembered is an actual place.

This phenomenon occurs in powerful literary uses, particularly in film. Film's facility for the duplication of shots makes possible an elaborated dream image of minute detail which can then be presented later as actuality. This implies a paradoxical break with traditional dream presentation, due to the extremely naturalistic presentation of the unreal imagery of a dream. One cannot be sure if Chaucer (above) presents a deja vu effect or a more indeterminate, but prophetic dream. Nevertheless, the wealth of naturalistic detail in a deja vu dream remains an unreal construct because it occurs within an unreal temporality where the naturalistic orientation of a sequential temporality from past to future is reversed.

John Carpenter provides a plausible, scientific explanation, cinematic representation, and narrative structure of deja vu in his recent film Prince of Darkness. Cavalcanti uses this phenomenon as a narrative structure in his influential film Dead of Night (1946), and in this film he critiques the Freudian explanation that it is "the creation of a dream after the event which alone makes prophetic dreams possible" (664). Calvalcanti, Welles (whose adaptation of The Trial is discussed below), and Carpenter all portray deja vu as some kind of dream phenomenon.

An even more radical presentation occurs in Chris Marker's "Bergsonian science fiction short La jetee" (Cook 484; this was produced in 1962, but its release was delayed until 1964 [Katz 777]). In this film a young boy sees a man shot and grows up to be this man who is shot. Due to Marker's manipulation of time and the method of time travel, it is impossible to maintain distinctions between dreams and events. The protagonist travels through time by means of drug-induced dreams which constitute the technology employed here. The Sobchauck's describe Marker's unique method of presentation:

> the film, except for one brief moment, is entirely composed of still photographs which freeze motion and destroy the distinction between past and present as we usually perceive it in the ongoing immediacy of the motion picture (390).

Marker dissolves the boundaries between dream and reality and reverses the temporality of past and future within his deja vu narrative structure. Another angle on deja vu occurs in D.M. Thomas' novel The White Hotel; here the phenomenon also structures the narrative, but it is presented more as symptom than dream (of course, symptom and dream are closely related). Thomas critiques Freud's work by having the character of Freud in his novel treat this "symptom" as simple hysteria, but the novel shows that the source of this symptom is actually the future destiny of the woman protagonist, so her "symptom" is actually prophetic and specific enough for this "symptom" to be considered a form of deja vu.

Dream phenomena like deja vu and dream content based on divination systems call into question both dream and reality temporalities based on the conventional distinctions of past, present, and future by suggesting forms of temporal simultaneity such that past, present, and future can "merge." This appears linguistically in the word "before." What is "before" one? This word operates to show both the past and the future are "before," requiring a contextual specification to explicate its reference with respect to convention, but in the word itself past and future merge or, at least, reside as oppositional and simultaneous. The image-genre matrix relies on the conventional distinctions of past, present, and future because these conventions

appear to be inherent in literary production, but this matrix also includes forms of unreal temporalities which oppose conventional chronology and which suggest that this convention may not be a rigorous one. Clearly, a more sophisticated theory of temporality would be an important factor in the revision of this model, but, currently, the problem of temporality is more a problem than a rigorous formulation. Thus, this matrix follows an integrated representation of temporal forms as significant production values. These forms are further specified by spatial conditions, recognizing the interrelatedness of space and time as continuous.

This summary of dream data and theories should help the recognition of the representational kinship between dreams and literature, particularly expressionistic literature. It should be clear by now that "literature" is being used as a general heading to include cinema as well. What follows is a method for using the material image to interpret and to classify literary works. Following this there will be a brief discussion of textual arrays to conclude this chapter and the first part of this study.

The Material Image in Dream Texts

The basic unit of interpretation with respect to the image-genre grid is the material image. This material image

is considered a common unit of representation that allows an equivalence between oral, verbal, and cinematic forms of production. The material image derives from two sources: first, Benjamin's material equality of images in mechanically reproduced texts and in the art of cinema and, second, a literary application of Hillman's development of the psychic image as a unit of representation in archetypal psychology. The material image promotes a sense of equality with respect to cultural representations, and it recognizes that cultural representations share an archetypal quality, as do representations in dreams.

The material image is a source of discourse which is necessarily produced rhetorically with respect to any particular image; the term "closure" cannot be applied to discourse, for the essence of discourse is continuous, dialectical play. This suggests that the material image itself cannot be subjected to "closure." Indeed, Benjamin's development of the concept of allegory as fragment also implies this lack of closure with respect to images. Also, Hillman's designation of the psychic image as a virtual complex also eludes closure in that this image continues to generate rhetorical descriptions of itself as a prelude to and as a part of its discourse. An illusion of closure may be promoted by aggregates of image representations, and a photographic image provides an illusion of closure through its representation of a tableau (many subtle perceived

qualities, such as shades of color or shading itself either escape or are forced by photographic representations). The material image promotes the recognition that all representational images are inherently open, and so are the texts which they combine to produce (see chapter one for the sources of this summary).

There are two kinds of material image which develop as a kind of continuum moving from relative clarity to indeterminacy. It may help to recall the various degrees of clarity with respect to dream images, since, after all these types tend to appear in dream texts. First, the definite material image: this type of image is visually elaborated so that it is clearly perceptible. For naturalism, most imagery is of this type; film also tends to consist of definite images; thus, there arises a tendency to identify film with naturalism. The definite material image provides a basis for comparative discourse (one image is easily compared to another). It helps to produce the illusion of image closure.

Second, the indefinite material image: no matter how fully elaborated, this type of imagery cannot be fully grasped; this withholding of definite form from the material image emphasizes the lack of closure inherent in image production. This kind of image sometimes is part of cinematic representation, for example, the "soft focus" shot in which objects cannot be distinguished until the focus is

adjusted to bring them to clarity. Expressionistic verbal production presents this type of image regularly. Since image media cannot present closure, the indefinite material image becomes the paradoxical juncture of verbal and of cinematic production. Paradoxically, image reality cannot be fully grasped.

These distinctions between the definite and indefinite forms of the material image are based on textual effects. One can easily read this definite or indefinite quality in a presented image. However, the indefinite type problematizes the definite one. At what point is an image definite? Paradoxically, one must consider where the illusion of reality is invoked to recognize the definite, but the recognition of this illusory quality disqualifies the definite. Naturalism depends on faith in the illusion of mimetic representation, and, in this type of discourse, the indefinite image may also participate in the form of the sublime (see the discussion of Eliot above). From a theoretical perspective, the indefinite material image either is designated as failed writing or itself designates the failure of writing to provide the illusion of the real, as it often does with Kafka and Beckett.

This conceptualization of a definite-indefinite image continuum will become clearer with respect to specific examples (one can be found in the "throne stowing" joke, above), and the method of the second part of this study

involves the comparison of definite and indefinite image structures in the texts of Kafka and Beckett. There are some precedents to this kind of conceptualization with respect to image representations. The first, mentioned earlier, involves McLuhan's designations of "hot" and "cool" media based on the degree of participation by a receiver in the contact form itself. McLuhan designates both print and cinema as "hot" media in that they present a totality of information to the receiver, while the telephone and television are "cool" media insofar as they require the participation of the receiver to complete the media contact. This participation occurs at a somatic level; for example, in watching television the viewer completes the picture, presented as a dot matrix, with the viewers own facility for active imagination. Where the film more or less replaces a spectator's dream capacity with its own high-resolution representations, the image contact of television actively solicits the viewer's dream capability to complete its own representation. In this sense, watching television is more literally a dream text since it partially induces its viewer to dream. This difference between film and television may be a sufficient cause for the disparate psychological effects often attributed to these similar image media (Cronenberg's film Videodrome explores this question of biological reception).

Analogous to this kind of somatic participation is the more literary issue of interpretative participation in which the audience must somehow complete the text which is presented to it. The indefinite image provokes participation by requiring the audience to question the presentation as it is taking place, while the definite image promotes a sense of completion or closure. Herman Melville's Moby-Dick provides examples of both kinds of imagery, since his story-telling narrator requires an active attention from his "listener," literally his reader. Melville's chapter entitled "The Great Heidelberg Tun" provides an example of the definite image through its precise, geometric description of a "Sperm Whale's head" because, as his narrator puts it, "to comprehend it aright, you must know something of the curious internal structure of the thing operated upon" (286). Melville's narrator not only provides a complete description here, but his quoted remark implies that elsewhere he may not be so thorough. Indeed, this is exactly the case with respect to the fate of Moby Dick, the great white whale. Nowhere does Melville indicate whether this whale lives or dies after his encounter with Ishmael's ship. The reader must search after clues and prepare a case concerning the fate of this whale, and, though the whale's escape may be a less likely conclusion, this fate is characterized by a certain indefiniteness even as it is certainly an issue in the

story. The reader must work interpretatively to complete the text because of the indefinite quality of Melville's image of the last appearance of Moby Dick: "the harpoon was darted; the stricken whale flew forward" (468).

Another precedent of this definite-indefinite image dichotomy can be found in Roy Caldwell's ludic interpretation of Kafka's novel The Castle:

> the novel obliges the reader to become a participant, rather than a spectator, in the making of the text . . . K. functions analogously to the reader -- i.e. both must decipher, must "read" the castle . . . the castle, an empty referent, is constituted by the discourse about it . . . this discourse takes the form of stories told about the castle and interpretations of these stories . . . the interplay between story-telling and story-interpreting becomes so complex that the two operations are no longer distinct; finally, the reader's interpretation of the novel becomes, in effect, a continuation of it (44).

Here Caldwell's designation of the castle as an empty referent is equivalent to the consideration of the castle as an indefinite image. Caldwell reads Benjamin's discussion of Kafka as "an activity of producing, of discovering meanings" as essentially ludic in which "the locus of play may be found neither in the one nor the other player but in the relation between them" (43, 51). This kind of interplay is characteristic of both Kafka and Beckett. As the forthcoming discussion will show, the relation between the definite and indefinite images in dream text is characterized by a paradoxical interplay in which definite images aggregate into indefinite image complexes, and

indefinite images are composed of definite components, like Caldwell's "stories about the castle."

Textual Arrays

The textual array will also provide a useful tool in that works found to be in an array will help deepen discursive appreciation. Arrays are necessarily involved in adaptive writing, so a clear qualification of adaptive fit arises from the analysis of image use in a cinematic adaptation by way of comparison with its source. If such an analysis reveals a discursive and generic congruence, one may agree that the adaptation fits the source text; on the other hand, the movement of generic discourse from one field to another will reveal to what extent a source text is being incorporated into other discourses. Clearly such discursive movement has significant ideological consequences. Other kinds of arrays will help to specifically show discursive connections between writers, connections that heretofore may have been rather vague. It should be stressed that an array alone provides limited evidence; each work involved ought to be subjected to an image analysis sufficient to classify it on its own terms before consideration of how its discourse is modified by participation in arrays.

The intertextual array is a form of allusion that enforces the non-traditional literary stance of

expressionistic writing. In Deleuze and Guattari's study Kafka, they develop the concept of a "minor literature," texts in which "language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization," in which "everything in them is political," and in which "everything takes on a collective value" (16-7). Usually, the intertextual array involves an allusive strategy, partly formal and partly informal, between texts of this kind of non-traditional orientation. This definition of the intertextual array has appeared elsewhere:

> the intertextual array involves the incorporation of images of other specific texts within a particular text; this kind of allusion is a frequent occurrence in postmodernism. This array goes somewhat beyond the tacit inscription of images of other styles, either literal or parodic, which is a feature of both consensual and conflictual intertextuality (often referred to as "collaborative" and "contentious," respectively, see Kelman 7). The primary distinction between these types of intertextual devices involves the subtle formal or informal acknowledgement (somewhat between the lack of acknowledgement, as in tacit allusions, and the formal footnote) by the author of the borrowed image which has been inscribed; thus, the surface of the text more or less readily yields the indication of the specific text. Also, this acknowledgement tends to indicate a collaborative discourse, such that the discourses of the inscribed text and the text which bears the inscription are at least partly congruent. . . This allusive strategy of the intertextual array is primarily distinguished from other intertextual relations by two features: 1) the inscribed image comes from an acknowledged specific text, even if the style of the inscription is very different from the style which has incorporated this image, so the text which bears the inscription provides some provenance for the recognition of the specific text that has been the source of this inscription (although such provenance may only be the mention of the name of

> the source text); and (2) there is a discursive congruence between the texts of this array; in other words, the textual image usually does not serve a discourse at odds with its original usage (31-2).[3.6]

The second part of this study provides a number of examples of intertextual arrays with regard to Kafka and Beckett, but here two related examples will illustrate the recognition and discursive effects of such arrays. These are to be found in the works of Joyce and of Borges.

The first, which has been discussed at length elewhere, involves the inscription of an allusive image by Joyce from Swinburne's poem "Dolores."[3.7] Even though "the name Dolores [Swinburne's title] only occurs in Ulysses in "Sirens" (11.518, 734)," these two occurrences of this name mark a complex allusion endowed with a double structure which reflects the double structure of Swinburne's poem itself (Crumb "Sweets of Sin" 239-40). In that discussion an explanation is provided of how several elements from the poem "Dolores" enter into Joyce's allusion, how the figure of "Dolores" provides a kind of unifying archetype between Bloom and Molly, and how this figure likely inhabits Bloom's character-consciousness, not just the "narrator" level of Joyce's novel. Nevertheless, there is another dimension to this intertextual array not included in that discussion, a dimension clarified by a brief excursion into literary history.

Swinburne's poem "Dolores" has undergone a kind of marginalization with respect to this poet's other work, and this "occulted" quality of "Dolores" has likely contributed to the lack of recognition of this poem's presence in Ulysses by previous Joycean scholars. Samuel Chew in his extensive study Swinburne (1929) recognizes "Dolores" as one of this poet's greatest metrical achievements:

> the history of the "Dolores" stanza, which is probably more closely associated with Swinburne than any other he employed, is complicated and can barely be indicated here. Gay used the eight-line anapestic trimeter for comic effect in "The Beggar's Opera"; Byron turned it to serious purpose in the "Stanzas to Augusta" and gave it greater weight by employing double rhymes in alternate lines. The stroke of inspiration by which Swinburne turned this jog-trot stanza into a thing of beauty was the truncation of the last line. When, with this shortened eighth line, consonantal and vocalic harmonies are empoloyed, Gay's old jingle becomes dignified and majestical (91-2).

It is worth recalling how influential Gay's play by way of Brecht and Weil has become in twentieth-century culture, but, it is a little surprising today that Chew attributes a similar effect to "Dolores" by referring to "the thousands of people who have chanted Swinburne's perverse litany to his Lady of Pain" and to this anecdote:

> Professor Saintsbury has told of the band of sudents, of whom he was one, who marched in lock step around the courts and the cloisters of Oxford, chanting "Dolores" . . . to understand Swinburne's prestige and influence from 1866 till about 1880 we must call into service that same historic sense which is necessary if we would understand the power of "Byronism" a generation earlier (93, n.1, 72).[3.8]

Swinburne, who had not completed his degree at Oxford and who had failed to win the Newdigate poetry prize there, must have felt some satisfaction at such a display, even if it contradicted his own opinion of this place: "that nobody in Oxford could be said to die, 'for they never begin to live'" (Morris 102, 224, 227, 48).

Such stirrings of life carried with them an anti-institutional flavor which Joyce could hardly have failed to appreciate, whose entire "Ithaca" episode of Ulysses is a lampoon of academic discourse. All this suggests an essentially political component to Joyce's development of his complex allusion to "Dolores," one apparently justified by a prolonged lack of recognition of any involvement of "Dolores" with Joyce's text, no doubt contributed to by the consignment of Swinburne's poem to the back pages of only the more "complete" Victorian anthologies.

Although Joyce has since become an academic "industry," there has remained some academic resentment towards him, manifested by a lessened canonical status as compared with Yeats and Eliot, the canonical "moderns," and by academic attacks on Joyce's allusive style. Such attacks probably prompted Borges to develop an intertextual array with Joyce's Ulysses in his story "The Immortal" in which Borges provides an informal discussion of various intertextual approaches. The narrative of "The Immortal" includes a

postscript in which a professor concludes this story to be "'apocryphal' because of 'intrusions of thefts'," but:

> Borges, as narrator, presents a short history of stylistic borrowings reaching back to Greece and including "the artifices . . . of Eliot," but the story's postscript documents the borrowings in the manuscript of Joseph Cartaphilus which "abounds in Latinisms" (105) and who was once a Roman tribune. Consequently, this story is arrayed with the writings of the documented authors, . . . but probably even more so with Joyce who is never mentioned. Naturally, the name "Ulysses" appears in the course of the story, and this is also the name of Joyce's novel. However, such a subtle reference, although sufficient, is not all that Borges provides, for it is commonly known that both Vico and Sinbad figure as important images in Ulysses (Crumb 34).

Borges, in his characteristic metatextual storytelling, refuses to accept an identity between the tacit allusion and plagiarism, suggesting a common quality of textuality:

> "When the end draws near," wrote Cartaphilus, "there no longer remain any remembered images: only words remain." Words, displaced and mutilated words, words of others, were the poor pittance left him by the hours and the centuries (34).

Of course, Borges' postscript to his narrative provides an informal documentation (one discovered by Christ to be of exceeding complexity, see The Narrow Act), and his references to images in Ulysses provide another informal from of documentation by including the name which is also Joyce's title (35). Borges' only formal allusion is an ironic one to Vico (35). Nevertheless, a number of tacit allusions remain, including one to the intertext of Petronius' novel The Satyricon in which a structural parody

of The Odyssey is replicated, with a vengence, by Joyce; this is suggested by Borges' invention of Homer's design of a "mad" city:

> so horrible that its mere existence and perdurance, though in the midst of a secret desert, contaminates the past and the future and in some way even jeopardizes the stars. As long as it lasts, no one in the world can be strong or happy ([111] 36).[3.9]

This satirical city parallels the satirical text, and Borges' play with the titles of Petronius and of Joyce is indicative of his own complex play with his own title of this story:

> we have fallen upon several meanings of "the immortal," as if they were so many swords. There is the human, authorial immortal to whom this remnant of text makes an end even as it provides its testament. There is the immortal text, the remnant of the author, which exists in self-denial of its authenticity and of its indeterminable author who is the narrator of the frame, who is the dreamer, who may be Borges. There is the immortal city of text of which the Cartaphilus manuscript is a microcosm and which encompasses the world, mocking that world through its satire of it, since all attempts at representation fall short. Perhaps not finally, there is the immortal dream-text, insubstantial, yet more present to itself than to the world which occasions it and which, like the city, threatens to undo this world.
>
> These variant meanings of the title image apply to the general questions of writing and of styles, the metatextual component of expressionism, through social alignment and political engagement, the postmodern form of expressionism (39).

The complexities of Borges' title elaborate the various dimensions of textuality: the individual author, his material product, the collectivity of texts, and the

universality of dreams which provoke their production all contribute to the seamless interweavings binding text to life itself. Within such a context, it becomes possible to speak of "living texts" which obliterate the distinction between subject and object and which continously reinvent meaning by means of their continual interplay. This study now moves to its second volume, the consideration of dream texts produced by Kafka and by Beckett.

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CHAPTER FOUR

FRANZ KAFKA

Introduction

Kafka and Beckett: General Remarks

Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett produced distinctive writing styles; readers often consider their styles to be unique, but a few comparisons have been forthcoming. Sandbank discusses an influence (acknowledged by Beckett and pursued by several critics) of Kafka's The Castle on Beckett's Watt (55-6). Sandbank concludes that:

> Beckett may be said to carry out a potential in Kafka that Kafka himself was determined to avoid, though not without the desperate struggle to which his diaries and notebooks give ample evidence (56).

Here a kind of literary "hearsay" based on authorial "intention" is employed to draw a broad distinction between Kafka and Beckett. This study seeks to show that a broad consideration of their texts does not justify such a conclusion, although it is clear that Beckett does extend some major literary strategies which appear in Kafka.

Deleuze and Guattari link Kafka and Beckett with Joyce, in a general way as writers of minority, making language "vibrate with a new intensity" (Kafka 19). Their laudable project discovers Kafka as a writer of minority opposed to the grand scheme of naturalistic portrayal, but they find in

Beckett "nothing remains but intensities." Linda Hutcheon compares Kafka and Beckett as examples of a form of "modernism," demonstrating "its compulsion to write mixed with a realization of the meaninglessness of writing"; in this way she applies the "nihilist" charge of institutional naturalism against them and proceeds to dismiss them from any participation in her form of "postmodernism" (43). This same charge of nihilism also has been used to exclude them from participation in "modernism" as well (in a seminar at Louisiana State University, Cleanth Brooks said that Kafka's "nihilism" disqualified him from literature altogether, simply a failure). This study seeks to show that not only do Kafka and Beckett participate in literary postmodernism, but that each articulates fundamental literary qualities that make postmodernism possible, including: an exposure of the myth of linguistic reference, an awareness of the limits of signification of the image, a ruthless denial of institutional history, and a production of text that challenges its reader, enforcing on that reader a participation in and responsibility for its discourse.[4.1]

In this study's context of image-production analysis, many similarities between these writers emerge. Their expressionistic texts often engage a dream temporality, developing archetypes and erasing the boundary between the subjective and the objective. Both can be read as black humorists and as black fantasists. Both produce forms of

the definite and indefinite material image, and this suggests that both employ writing to reveal the indeterminacy inherent in expression by exposing the falsehoods of institutional structures which validate meaning and by implicating the reader in the production of discourse. Paradoxically, both produce strong textual effects which have been variously described as religious, psychological, fantastic or marvelous, and naturalistically realistic. The recognition of a dream context, an oneiric representational field, in their writing provides an interpretive ground that reconciles many of these disparate, contradictory effects.

It is important to recognize both the similar and dissimilar structures found in Kafka and Beckett, but to over-emphasize differences between Beckett and Kafka leads to these writers being viewed as isolated and unique stylistic "experimenters," with great controversy concerning the relative success or failure of their "experiments." This study seeks to elucidate both common and distinguished stylistic techniques in Kafka and Beckett through image analysis. The application of the image-genre matrix cuts through the superficial stylistic differences which seem to be such formidible obstacles to an understanding of their common mastery of literary expression. Both Kafka and Beckett produce texts of image-montage which emphasize indeterminacy. Beckett applied his writing to many medial

forms, while Kafka focused on a few forms of written presentation. Both are distinquished, however, by their complex uses of verbal technology, exposing the paradoxical quality of written language to reveal new terrains of expression and to conceal special significance.

In addition, some attention to other artists will be helpful, paticularly with respect to Kafka, in that they are arrayed with Kafka's writings. These include Orson Welles (film The Trial), Alberto Moravia (The Conformist), Bernardo Bertolucci (film The Conformist), Georges Bataille (Blue of Noon), William Burroughs (Naked Lunch and Nova Express), Edgar Allan Poe ("William Wilson"), and, with respect to Beckett, H.P. Lovecraft ("The Unnamable") and, finally, Jean Cocteau (Orpheus), who not only "reads" Kafka into this film, but who also provides some insight with respect to Beckett's "other-wordly" vision of resistance. Strategies of image arrays help to illustrate how discursive alliances are formed between these artists.

These arrays develop because writers who set themselves against institutionalized literary tradition promote this antogonism by stylistically marking their texts as "outside" of literary convention; consequently, these stylistic innovators risk isolation and alienation, so these innovators develop a kind of communal support through a sharing of image strategies to promote a common discourse. These strategies are often fairly subtle; for example, D. M.

Thomas' novel The White Hotel features a protagonist whose "neurotic" symptoms are actually prophetic signs of personal doom in a story with a deja vu temporal structure. Freud and institutional psychology deny the possibility of any "prophetic" sign, but Kafka produces images that are prophetic of personal doom (with respect to The Metamorphosis and The Trial, see below), so Thomas' innovation is arrayed, or allied with, Kafka's. Both innovations extend the possibilities of literary representation, but both also deny naturalistic conventions, and both imply a discourse opposed to traditional assumptions. This common image strategy of Kafka and of Thomas ameliorates the isolation of either author; their alienation merges into a common cause. These discursive arrays undercut assumptions of authorial originality, the means by which texts are invested with an "aura," and imply that common attitudes and discourses emerge from writing itself.

Kafka and the "Kafka Affect"

Kafka's style is characterized by paradox, particularly with regard to the clash it exhibits between naturalistic and expressionistic elements. Precise realism in Kafka is mixed with unreal gestures in such a way that each maintains a separate presence, and this has led to controversies among

Kafka's readers. Both Benjamin and Corngold discuss the varieties of interpretation and misprision attributed to critics of Kafka. A powerful illustration of such controversies occurs when Todorov's definition of the fantastic is applied to Kafka's writing.

Brooke-Rose discusses how Todorov cannot consider Kafka as a writer of the fantastic even though Kafka's writing contains fantastic elements:

> we are in the marvellous, since a supernatural event is introduced at the start [of The Metamorphosis], yet it is accepted at once and provokes no hesitation. The event is nevertheless shocking, impossible, yet becomes paradoxically possible, so that in this sense we are in the uncanny. And Todorov simply concludes that Kafka's narratives "relate both to the marvellous and to the uncanny; they are the coincidence of two apparently incompatible genres" (66).

Brooke-Rose suggests that Todorov requires a paradoxical formulation ("the coincidence of two apparently incompatible genres") to distinguish Kafka's writing from fantastic writing.

Todorov's genre of the fantastic, here quoted by Hans Ternes, "is defined as that 'hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event'" (221). For Brooke-Rose, Todorov's fantastic depended upon a hesitation in the reader (produced by an ambiguous text) between natural ("uncanny" or real) and supernatural ("marvellous" or unreal) explanations of apparently supernatural events sustained to the end of the story (63). Apparently, there is an

ambiguity of translation as to whether "person" represents "reader" or "character," for Ternes believes Todorov's definition of the fantastic applies to Kafka if that definition is extended to include the reader: "the essential element of the traditional fantastic is shifted from the narrator/protagonist to the actual reader" (222). Brooke-Rose's objection to Todorov's assessment of Kafka only works with regard to a person in the narrative, but direct consultation with Todorov may have led to her modification of Todorov's definition.

Allowing for some imprecision, there is some agreement that in Kafka real and unreal elements are distinct, but they cohabit in his text. Moreover, there is agreement that Kafka's use of real and unreal elements increase the burden on Kafka's readers by creating difficulties with traditionally distinct forms of imagery. Consequently, the problem of the fantastic in Kafka leads to the recognition that in Kafka's hands the fantastic is an expressionistic provocation, bedeviling readers through a conflation of distinct modes.

Benjamin warns Kafka's readers: "there are two ways to miss the point of Kafka's works. One is to interpret them naturally, the other is the supernatural interpretation" ("Franz Kafka" 127). Ternes attempts to sort Kafka's works according to Todorov's distinctions, uncanny, marvelous, and fantastic, combined with another definition of the

fantastic, from Sartre, of "'stifling immanence'" (225). Ternes concludes:

> that the fantastic is connected with Kafka's basic vision of the world . . . its function is one of unsettling and shattering the readers' complacent view of the world by confronting them with a reality that is presented both as absolutely true as well as unbearably oppressive (228).

Ternes attemps to follow Benjamin's implication that only a broad, integrative reading of these diverse elements encompasses Kafka's writing, but Ternes' reading tends toward gloom; he seems to miss satirical humor. Moreover, Ternes' recognition of Kafka's archetypal qualities seems unnecessarily constrained as "experiential knowledge of general validity based on Kafka's own subjective experience but projected onto a universal level" (227).

Todorov's historical genre of the pure fantastic appeared contemporarily to the gothic novel (Brooke-Rose 62). In fact, Todorov's fantastic is complementary to the gothic "because the Gothic supernatural experience is structurally cognate with the Todorovian moment of hesitation" (Voller 197). Nevertheless, Benjamin's suggestion differs from Todorov's "hesitation" somewhat in that Todorov's fantastic reader seeks an explanation of events in terms available from the gothic while Benjamin's reader of Kafka is warned that such terms are misleading. Indeed, Voller agrees with "scholars of the fantastic" who question Todorov's "extreme narrowness of its central genre, the dualistic assumptions of its structuralism, and its

inability (or refusal) to account for twentieth-century fantasy" (197). Voller's conclusion sheds light on why Todorov's discussion of the fantastic, with its connection to the gothic, is so often applied to Kafka, for he finds "the Gothic as a literature of spiritual disquiet," and this broad chord is roundly sounded by Kafka (204).

Kafka's juxtaposition of real and unreal images expressionistically calls attention to the poles of reality and unreality as strategies of writing. Kafka presents a progression from the gothic and its complement of the fantastic (as defined within Todorov's limits) wherein the real and the unreal compete as mimetic formulas. Kafka recognizes this competition, and he juxtaposes these opposing strategies to shift his writing from reality-based formulas to imaginative strategies, creating a text of images where real and unreal representations clash, each vying for recognition.

Reading Kafka as a producer of dream texts provides a broader, more sufficient conception of the fantastic in which realism has its place, just as in dreams, but the representation of dreams takes place in a subjective context. While there is little doubt that relations exist between subjectivity and objectivity, the representation of subjectivity is fundamentally opposed to the imitation of objective reality. Kafka provides much evidence that a broader, more unreal universe encloses his written

"parables." Kafka develops an oneiric representational context, and his writing emphasizes dreams to show how writing is reactive.

Kafka's portrayal of Poseidon as an overworked bureaucrat not only blends the mundane with the unreal but, ultimately, provides this mixture as an unreal situation in itself, one in which a reactive gesture of mixing the mundane with the unreal broadens the scope of the unreal to include the mundane. In Amerika, Karl Rossmann gazes at the Statue of Liberty contemplating how "the arm with the sword rose up as if newly stretched aloft" (3). Of course, this statue bears a torch, not a sword, and Kafka's substitution replaces a symbol of hope with one of division. Does Karl dream this sword, or is this sword a realistic, satirical detail, or is this sword image an expressionistic device which invites comparison with other swords, perhaps that of the expulsion from Eden? Kafka provides no clarification, so this sword image partakes of all these possibilities, mixing the subjective, the mundane, and the expressionistic in one representation. Todorov's distinct categories (uncanny, marvellous, fantastic) for Kafka become a broad, inclusive dreamspace, an oneiric representational field.

Harold Bloom has presented a collection of essays on Kafka's The Castle which seek to portray Kafka as a Kabbalistic writer, producing a "Negative, his hidden and subversive New Kabbalah," one which fails (Bloom 21-2).

Here the line of interpretation proceeds fruitfully from the unreal, but failure seems more a problem of the system itself in that the Kabbalah would create a system for the unreal, to render it into intelligibility, and one wonders if this was ever Kafka's goal. Kafka provides much insight through his writing, and this insight may give rise to the expectation of an elaborated and closed system, but it remains unclear that Kafka strove to provide such a system. Such "intentional" conclusions should not be justified.

However many systems have been applied to dream analysis, all have fallen short of complete elaboration. There is a sense of the opaque at the core of Kafka's representational fiat. Again, a paradox arises in that the insight provided by Kafka promotes the expectation of an answer, but Kafka does not provide this answer. Kafka's representation approaches indeterminacy, and his use of the indefinite material image makes clear how important indeterminacy is in Kafka's style, for this indeterminacy contributes to his paradoxical effects.

As Bloom finds Kafka's writing a magnificent failure, Deleuze and Guattari seem to find it a magnificent experiment: "we believe only in a Kafka <u>experimentation</u> that is without interpretation and rests only on tests of experience" (<u>Kafka</u> 7). Their designation of his work as an experiment seems to undercut their evaluation of its success. Perhaps this occurs because their evaluation of

Kafka's writing as politically subversive also requires a powerful naturalistic effect as in a political alternative (which ought to be clearly defined), yet Kafka's writing, as they suggest above, resists interpretation.

Kafka's direction of subversion arrives at its destination only insofar as it resists orthodox interpretation. Indeed, for Kafka, this indeterminacy may have been a fully sufficient literary goal. Now paradox is piled upon paradox, because if for Bloom Kafka cannot enclose the unreal universe, for Deleuze and Guattari Kafka cannot enclose the political world, although both studies grant him a considerable degree of success.

How is so much offered by Kafka in both real and unreal spheres ultimately seen as insufficient? Benjamin's warning that these spheres are insufficient develops into a strict opposition: either these spheres are unworkable as regards Kafka, or else Kafka is seen as failing these gothic standards. As Kafka provides substance, he seems also to provide hope, but Kafka's lack of provision of hope seems to cause his readers to denigrate to varying degrees the substance which they find in Kafka, another paradox. Benjamin reports: "as Kafka puts it, there is an infinite amount of hope, but not for us" ("Some Reflections on Kafka" 144). Kafka imbues his style with paradox, but, often, critics have been unwilling to accept a paradoxical indeterminacy at the heart of Kafka's work. This is exactly

the paradox of dream which promises an answer and which conceals this answer within a subjective symbolism.

Ultimately, the problem of the dream is equivalent to the problem of writing, and Kafka merges both in his expressionistic image of the writing machine from "In The Penal Colony." This execution machine that inscribes its message into the flesh of its victim, repeatedly, is a dream image emphatically incarnating the mortality of language, suggesting that writing is mired in the opacity of death. A precedent to this image occurs in Amerika in Karl's "American writing-desk": "by turning a handle you could produce the most complicated combinations and permutations of the compartments to please yourself" (41).[4.2] These various formations of this desk are analogous to logical structures in language: when logical assumptions change, so do the configuarations of the system alter to accommodate such change.

Kafka's description of Karl's desk is accompanied by a Christmas reverie from Karl's childhood comparing this desk to a mechanical "Christmas panorama." Again, the sense of inevitability in this mechanical system through which the players move in predestined arcs is associated to the configurations of this desk. Also, such devices anticipate cinematic presentation, with their predestined character analogous to the limits of cinematic montage: once images have been chosen, these images work together to constrain

discourse in particular directions. As with the execution machine, this desk suggests the inevitability of a mechanical language, a system constraining writing to predestined, mortal fates.

Though these images, Kafka expresses his resistance to language systems constrained by tradition and mortality. Writing, like the dream, becomes an end in itself, one that reveals as it also conceals, as Heidegger describes the technology of writing, a paradoxical technology. Kafka's paradoxical style is well suited to this paradoxical technology; in essence, Kafka makes transparent writing's inherent contraints. Kafka's writing is subversive in that he rejects traditional forms with predestined ends, causing these forms to clash, perhaps even to collapse, in his attempt to represent the complex mystery of imagination.[4.3]

Stanley Corngold's discussion of The Metamorphosis moves in this direction with his recognition that Kafka's writing is a mode in which "writing reflects itself, in the mode of allegory, as metamorphosis, literality, death, play, and reduction -- the whole in a negative and embattled form" (The Commentators' Despair 35). Corngold uses the term allegory in Benjamin's sense as "nonpresence," and the appropriateness of this kind of allegorical approach to Kafka indirectly suggests that Kafka's writing may have helped Benjamin develop this conception of allegory.

Kafka's work suggests that there is a problem with writing, that through its mixture of presence and nonpresence, it seems on the verge of its own extinction as a technology, that it has reached its end, that it cannot meet the expectations which it has itself created. These manifestations of mortality represent effects that Benjamin referred to as the radical withering of the aura, the dissociation of writing and tradition, and the universal equality of effect of art within the technology of reproduction ("Work of Art" 221-23).

This principle underlies much of Kafka's writing and is itself often an explicit theme, as in "Poseidon" where a god is seen as an overworked bureaucrat:

> one is tempted to say: once he was certain of eventual failure, everything worked out for him <u>en route</u> as in a dream. There is nothing more memorable than the fervor with which Kafka emphasized his failure" (Benjamin, "Some Reflections on Kafka" 145).

Such "failure" opens potentials in writing by suggesting possibilities, while denying their realizations. Kafka juxtaposes real and unreal as competing potentials that cannot be realized since each potential denies the realization of the other, a mutual cancellation of traditional effects. Ultimately, this paradoxical "nonpresence" or indeterminacy provokes the "Kafka affect."

Kafka's textual effect is closely bound to affect, through his emphasis on the powerful emotions of his characters. This emotional intensity imbues the opacity of

his confrontational style with a psychic charge. Kafka's readers are participating in this dream text through their continual interpolations, occasioned by his indeterminacy, but this participation is augmented by an intense emotional ambience. In his work Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino writes:

> with cities, it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a rebus that conceals a desire or, its reverse, a fear (44).

Calvino provides an implicit dream text; this results in readers being drawn closely to the impressions of his characters who represent archetypes (here Kublai Khan, emperor, and Marco Polo, explorer).

In Kafka, anger and fear are common and, often, violent emotions. This sort of emotional explosion comes up regularly in Kafka: the father's sudden fury and his son's reactive panic in "The Judgment," K's angry fits in The Trial, Uncle Jacob's imperious dismissal of his nephew Karl in Amerika. Such outbursts are typical, and this emotional instability suggests an unconscious immanence, flooded with the emotional power of Jung's shadow archetype.[4.4] Kafka's dream text preserves emotional intensity as, Freud shows, dreams also preserve it.

Kafka's reader may feel sympathy for K's predicament in The Trial, but the reader ought to recognize K's pettiness, arrogance, and selfishness, qualities that suggest K is "anti-heroic." Such unattractive qualities, of which the

subject remains unaware, participate in the formation of the personal shadow. K's confrontation with a generalized sense of personal guilt in the image of unspecified charges against him represents a confrontation with his shadow. Moreover, one may read the guard before the door of the law as a figuration of this shadow barring the door to the unconscious; this is suggested by the series of guards: "from hall to hall, keepers stand at every door, one more powerful than the other" (The Trial 213). In effect, these guards are all one, indicating the dominance of the shadow over the protagonist and leaving him only with the response of frustrated affect: the man is afraid of the guard, and the guard is quick to anger.

Amerika provides an image of how Kafka's reader can be inscribed into the writing itself. When Karl receives the note of his dismissal from his Uncle Jacob, "a man of principle," his uncle suggests that "I would pick you up, of all people, with these two arms that are now holding this paper" (94). Presumably, Karl holds this note in his two arms to read this, while Green holds up a candle. This emphasis on the image of the writer and of the reader holding the text serves to emphasize to the reader of the novel that the reader is also holding this text. The reader's act of holding is reflected in the text by acts of holding ascribed to Uncle Jacob and to Karl.

The imperious dismissal contained in this note is analogous to the dismissal of the guard before the door to the law, more so because Uncle Jacob is a senator: "Against my wishes you decided this evening to leave me; stick, then, to that decision all your life (94-5). The intense anger of the senator is diffused somewhat, distanced by its containment in the note that Karl is reading, just as the reader of this novel holds at a distance this text with its explosive emotions. A similar narrative device in The Trial joins the reader's perspective with that of K's (see below). These image devices, which inscribe the reader into the text by calling attention to the act of reading, link textual effects with emotional affects, provoking affect in the reader through the expressionistic device of imaging the reader in the text. Kafka's texts bring out unconscious elements and implicate the reader in this unconscious field.

Kafka enhances "realism" with his use of powerful emotions associated with the immanence of the shadow. Image devices which inscribe the reader into the text dissolve the boundary between reader and character: the character is in the act of reading or of being read, paralleling the action of the reader, and both reader and character share in this representation of immanence. To this extent, readers participate in the characters' confrontation with the destabilized, difficult, and paradoxical forces of the shadow, the alter-ego which forms a common link to readers

themselves. Kafka's text unfolds in the zone of contact with unconscious immanence, indeterminate and malicious. This moral battleground informs Kafka's context, and it is hardly surprising that readers often respond with dismay and disappointment. Few see the humor in Kafka, though he is fond of jokes, for to them the foolishness of many scenes is clouded by unrelenting gloom.

Kafka's dark satire provokes an unrelenting ambivalence. Does it seem appropriate to laugh when the officer in the penal colony dies? The image device of the writing machine operating on this character mirrors the contact between the reader and Kafka's writing; the officer's faith in the machine parallels readers' expectations of insight and order through writing's subordination of language. Instead, the reader is confronted with an agressive, ambivalent text which turns writing back upon an instinctual dreamspace. Nonetheless, this dark immanence is implicated as a formative power in the development of language and discourse. Kafka's representation of the chaos which writing seeks to order undercuts and ironizes formulas for truth, such as that represented by the officer, executed by his own device. By extension, this destabilization can erode readers' confidence in intrepretation itself. Interpretation takes place within an ambivalent, immanent context. The "Kafka affect" represents an attempt to elaborate the major factors

contributing to this disturbing, paradoxical context informing Kafka's writing.

The aspects of the "Kafka affect" may be described as follows. First, disorientation or shock results from the encounter with the dream text; second, fright, or the connection of violence with the familiar is brought out by Kafka's investing real structures with unconscious immanence; third, dread, proximity to death, or morbidity serve to emphasize the hopelessness of Kafka's dream worlds; fourth, mystification, actually a demystification, is exemplified by Kafka's radical transformation of traditional sources. Each of these will be discussed individually and then in relation to Kafka's definite material image strategies.

Shock

Kafka's development of an oneiric, representational context provokes shock in that traditional formulas for interpretation are displaced by their juxtaposition in an ambivalent, subjective mode of writing. Kafka's mixture of realism and fantasy confuses these opposing forms of literary order and requires the reader to recognize this expressionistic recombination in order to participate in the broader, interpretative context of his dream text. The shifting complexity of Kafka's dream images are analogous to

film montage, which also produces a shock effect. Benjamin explains this aspect of cinema in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction":

> the spectator's process of association in view of these images is indeed interrupted by their constant, sudden change. This constitutes the shock effect of the film, which, like all shocks, should be cushioned by heightened presence of mind.

In a note to this statement, Benjamin discusses "man's need to expose himself to shock effects" as an "adjustment to the dangers threatening him" (238, 250).

Kafka's prose reacts to both physical and psychological dangers in the modern world through their representation as dream images, just as cinema represents through montage. To this extent, Kafka's writing coheres with this basic parameter of cinematic production: dream juxtapositions correspond to cinematic montage, and both require intense attention by audiences who participate through their associations.

One may find in Gregor's transformation a withdrawal from life's dangerous complexity incarnated in a dream image of a bug. This develops a lycanthropy or "becoming animal" which Deleuze and Guattari insist "lets nothing remain of the duality of a subject of enunciation and a subject of the statement; rather, it constitutes a single process, a unique method that replaces subjectivity" (Kafka 36). Within the dream context, such animalism incarnates subjectivity; it replaces demarcations of objective and subjective narrative

space with a deeply subjective perspective. Freud showed how animals, from vermin to monsters, represent libidinal qualities in dreams; Kafka's coup involves his location of subjectivity within this animal representation, rather than the usual dream-subjectivity recognition of an animal as representative of the complexing of erotic desire and guilt.[4.5]

This displacement of narrative space is rather subtle, but this progression is clear with respect to narrative conventions. Although the explanation is involved, the recognition of this displacement is crucial to an understanding of Kafka's narrative representation. In naturalistic mimesis, there is a clear distinction between objective and subjective narrative space, and a dream is designated as a dream in the text. Something of this distinction carries over into dream representation itself, in that the dreamer may consider his own self-representation in a dream as a corresponding subjectivity, while the dreamer perceives other dream elements as outside of his dream-self, as relatively objective phenomena. The traditional objective-subjective polarity is thus displaced onto the subjective dream-text.

This distinction structures the experience of the dream: for example, "I was surrounded by wolves" is a narrative statement inherently neither objective nor subjective, but if it is designated as a dream statement,

then "I" is a relatively subjective, narrative space, and "wolves" is relatively objective to "I." On interpretation, the dreamer may seek to understand the significance of "wolves" while assuming "I" to represent the dreamer's own subjective self. Of course, this is a temptation to the misprision of the dream material, since all representations in dreams are structured by subjective relations, and this misprision results precisely from disregarding this prime directive of dream interpretation and interpreting the dream as if it were a naturalistic story where "wolves" are an objective threat to a subjective "I."

An interpretation that respects the subjective ordering of the dream experience recognizes the complex of "I" and "wolves" as a single, subjective representation with a more accurate result: "I am a wolf" or "I am very often wolfish." In this case, one reads the dream itself, without imposing a false distinction between the dream subject and relatively objective threats to this subject. The distinction between these two readings in which one may evade the identity of the dreamer and the wolves while the other accepts this identity is described by Freud as a censoring facility that incarnates resistance to the dream vision so that one may through misprision reject the dream vision's identity between the dreamer and the wolves and, instead, displace the wolves onto an objective "projection": "just as I were surrounded by wolves" suggests some "they" are "wolves," not

the dreaming "I" (note the punning relation with "eye" which sees outward rather than inward).[4.6]

Taking this narrative progression one step further sheds light on Kafka's narrative space. For if one defeats resistance to the dream vision and recognizes the interpretation "I am a wolf," then there is no need for the resistance mechanism, and the dreamer may dream of <u>being</u> a wolf (please forgive some oversimplification here to make this point). Consequently, the dreamer's subjectivity will be taken up with "wolfishness," and the dreamer's subjectivity coalesces into a dream of being a wolf where there is no distinction between "I" and "wolves"; instead "I" and "wolf" are a subjective identity. This is an altogether different kind of dream; in fact, it is totemic or archetypal, and different rules of interpretation apply.

Jung developed his system of dream interpretation for understanding archetypal dreams. One cannot but be impressed by the way in which Kafka's representations accord with mechanisms described by Freud, as does Ternes: "the laws of psychology, especially Freudian psychology, can provide rational answers to the mysterious phenomena [in Kafka's writing]" (225-26). Nevertheless, those who object to Freudian readings of Kafka have a point in that Kafka's representations surpass those of typical Freudian dreams, since Kafka represents on an archetypal level.

This progression of the dreaming consciousness into a more purely subjective, narrative space parallels a development of individuation wherein the individual overcomes ego resistance and perceives the alter-ego, opening the perceptual door to the shadow archetype. As this study progresses, it will become clearer that this is, at least partially, Kafka's significance of the "door of the law."

From the perspective of narrative space, this progression of individuated consciousness engenders a progression of dream representation itself wherein all dream elements are recognized as constituting a subjective whole, with interpretation operating within this context. Archetypal dreams are characterized by their vivid clarity, but this clarity itself can be opaque: "why am I a wolf?" is a difficult question because many psychic elements contribute to this deceptively simple statement. Nonetheless, "I am a wolf" is inherently less deceptive than "I am surrounded by wolves," and the recognition of this identity prepares the way for a meditation on the psychic image of "wolf" as a form of archetype.

This stage of subjective, narrative space characterizes the movement by which Kafka carries the representation of subjectivity even deeper into the subjective realm, endowing hitherto representative creatures with the point of view and kind of intelligence that it is thought they represent,

making them into totems or archetypes. Kafka expressionistically portrays the representational tension between the false "objective subjectivity" of the resistant dreamer and the denser subjectivity of the archetypal vision in his story "The Burrow" where the subject alternates between a projected human subjectivity and a lycanthropic subjectivity. Deleuze and Guattari recognize the power of this representational fiat. Such fantastic structures in Kafka serve to emphasize how deeply the real is enmeshed in its own subjective projection and, through shock, to enforce this recognition of illusory representation upon the reader.

Fright

Second, fright, or the connection of violence and the familiar is brought out by Kafka's investing real structures with unconscious immanence. In dreams ordinary objects are vehicles of representational power; in this way, dreams disguise their own significance. Sometimes, as in "Cares of a Family Man," Kafka uses the indefinite material image to suggest this power in the ordinary, for Odradek is quite ordinary for all its elusiveness. More often, though, the natural qualities of the ordinary are invested with terror by surreal juxtaposition, so a lumber-room door opens on to "The Whipper" (The Trial 83), and the intricate, deadly

"apparatus" of the penal colony rests upon mere sand (The Complete Stories 140).

Kafka uses juxtaposition to bring this immanence into closer contact with the familiar: Mrs. Wese feels "reassured" by the sound of a doorbell an instant before her husband is murdered (The Complete Stories 403). The equivalence Girard discovers between "sacrifice" and "justice" is dramatically, and humorously, rendered by Kafka "In the Penal Colony" (Violence and the Sacred 16-22). Girard reminds us that "as soon as the judicial system gains supremacy, its machinery disappears from sight" (22). Kafka's narratives force this machinery into view, and the reader must witness the carnage, even when the reader has been drawn into a close subjective relation to the victim of this apparatus of justice as in The Trial.

Dread

Third, dread, morbidity, or the sense of proximity to death serves to emphasize the hopelessness of Kafka's dream worlds. Graphic violence and graphic deaths are common in Kafka. In fact, the very excess of violence which comes at the end of "In the Penal Colony" is an important clue to the reader's recognition of a satirical process at work, and the reader may recognize how the machine's slaughter of the officer and its own self-destruction provide the components

of a joyous liberation from petty tyranny. If one reads the penal colony as psychic space, where all pleasure is punished, and reads the explorer as incarnating a sense of self-awareness, then this "parable" or fable provides an illustration of the ease with which one might free oneself from shame, for the explorer figure suggests a psychic awareness willing to overcome ego resistance, represented by the officer and the machine.

One may read this story as a description of a moment of psychic liberation with the various characters portraying types of psychic self-conflict, analogous to structures described by Freud. Granted, such a comic effect cannot be realized if the reader is daunted by all this blood, but such blood accurately represents the ongoing destruction of the psyche at war with itself. Sandbank here provides an example of a reader derailed by blood and by linearity when he asserts:

> the murderous machine in Kafka's story must kill the officer, its most fanatic adherent, in order to assert itself against the new liberalism . . . [continued in note] It murders the officer as he tries to make it inscribe the new liberal concept of justice on his body. (140, 174, n.6).

Sandbank misses the point and the joke involved with the machine's self-destruction, a gestalt which includes the officer, who is only an extension of this "murderous" machine itself. It is a joke to consider that any message might "liberalize" this deadly apparatus, set to terminate life with any inscription whatsoever.

Kafka's sense of morbidity parallels the gestures of torture common in the work of Sade, for Sade's work provides a suffocating morbidity that enforces satirical and political effects. Thus, in Sade one discovers another of Kafka's precursors. The multitudinous death-endings in Kafka do not usually suggest joy, but they do provide a sense of relief, as the oppresssion of existence stops. Moreover, this gesture expressionistically portrays the end of the process of writing; this paradoxical process in which the only relief from the conflict of personal and social forces comes with the end of portrayal, with the "death" of writing, contributes to this sense of an end. Indeed, Kafka leaves behind the linear text of writing; instead, he develops a text of archetypal images. This represents a technological progression: writing continues, still rooted in the visual, but the visual element progresses from linear deciferment of words to the holistic perception of psychically charged images.

Deleuze and Guattari recognize "there is something of Dracula in Kafka, a Dracula who works by letters, letters that are like bats" (Kafka 29-30). For Dracula, his undead existence unfolds on the level of the soul; his soul is thirsty for the experience of other souls, an indefatigable pleasure in an almost unbounded existence, but for mere humans, to whom death constitutes a constant boundary, the promise of an undead existence powerfully seduces. Bram

Stoker's novel plays with the relation of pleasure to spirituality while attacking naive social restrictions which reflect death's vigil over existence. Death is welcome indeed to Dracula's female victims who are also the victims of social institutions. Kafka universalizes this institutional kingdom of death., His characters propel themselves towards a confrontation with death, and if this confrontation is not triumphant, at least it provides the relief of an end to struggle.

This melancholy theme of morbidity effects an intensification of text, one recognized by Deleuze and Guattari as "thresholds of intensities" (Kafka 41). In Jean Cocteau's film Orpheus, when Orpheus enters the kingdom of the dead, he enters Kafka's world where sober bureaucrats dole out fates through agents, of whom some are beginning to revolt. The woman who is the death of Orpheus and whom Orpheus loves passionately eventually kills Orpheus in the kingdom of death in order to make him immortal, a gesture of defiance to those who administer death's kingdom. This woman goes to her own judgment in a paradoxical state of hopeless exultation.

What is valuable about Cocteau's use of Kafka's motifs is that Cocteau through these motifs provides a reading of Kafka, whose novel The Trial produces a strange image of Orpheus (see below). While these motifs provide for the spectator elements recognizable as Kafka's, Cocteau's themes

of spiritual revolt, of the identification of evil with death, and of habitual inertia provide a realization that these themes are also Kafka's, but they have all too often gone unrecognized by Kafka's readers. Cocteau's fable deals explicitly with these themes, which are in many ways far removed from the mythic source (this is explained in more detail under the next section "Mystification"). Cocteau's presentation employs a minimum of blood, so the humor and the paradoxical logic of this film are closer to its surface. In Kafka, these lighter qualities share his text with shocking, frightful, and dreadful motifs, and, apparently, readers are often sufficiently overwhelmed by some elements so that they overlook others.

Mystification

A fourth element of the "Kafka affect" is mystification, actually a demystification, exemplified by misreadings that develop from radical transformations of traditional sources. While for much of literature, especially naturalistic literature, tradition is a reservoir of "truth" and authority, the reactive, expressionistic Kafka cannot faithfully transmit traditional, authoritarian presentations of the real. For Kafka, dust and dirt, petty lusts for power and sex, and omnipresent death and decay are the transmissions of the ages. Poseidon labors at his

cluttered desk. Kafka exemplifies Benjamin's "liquidation of the traditional value of the cultural heritage" ("The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" 221).

Some examples of this rift with traditional formulas follow. The Trial witnesses a "process" of fate from which even the most obscure operations of anything like justice are eradicated. The exquisite machine of the penal colony expresses a paradoxical desire for its own dismantling; thus, the inanimate is so outraged by the uses to which it has been put that it yearns to murder its caretaker. Of course, the machine is a cipher for living processes, including mimetic naturalism, and its inanimism suggests the triumph of death, but the revolt of this machine represents a triumph of life over death. In The Metamorphosis, the protagonist is replaced by the metaphor, and the shape of the metaphor only announces that a deadly fate is at hand (more on this below). Traditional elements appear in a new context, a reactive dream field of indeterminacy where tradition is exhausted in the face of the unknown.

Just as Kafka exposes the sham of justice by forcing the reader to view its mechanisms and carnage, so too does Kafka show the impotence of tradition to explain indeterminacy. The parable "Before the Law" does little to explain K's situation, except insofar as it provides a vehicle for traditional thought, and the reader sees how the presentation of tradition provides no help to K. Perhaps

this is Kafka's way of showing how writing is no longer as capable of transmitting tradition as it was once thought to be. This is also a problem in writing as shown by Girard. Girard's discussion of the transformation from the myth of Oedipus to the drama of Sophocles shows how writing revises its sources:

> one cannot persevere in bringing to light the symmetrical quality of tragedy -- as we are now doing -- without contradicting the fundamental implications of the myth" (72).

The implication of successive revisions, some of which contradict mythic sources, that provide the foundation for art in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is that tradition persists as a state of confusion. For Kafka to demystify tradition by portraying it as confusion ("Before the Law") or as machines of fate (The Trial, The Metamorphosis) reverses the naturalistic ruse of faith in which tradition clarifies but nonetheless, remains mysterious. Such a reversal naturally upsets readers' expectations when readers expect an efficient, though mysterious, transmission of tradition through the text, and a disorientation results.

Kafka's disorientation is really a recognition of traditional disorientation which has been named "rightness" through an act of faith. While faith can name what it cannot comprehend, Kafka names an oppressive materialism: dirt is dirt and lies are lies. In Kafka, this radical reorientation to the material world sets the stage for

spiritual potential. It is as if the sky has fallen, but the stars still twinkle within the debris. One may not be quick to realize how such hopelessness is appropriate to a spiritual inquiry, unless one is made to feel it. Since this reorientation which looks like confusion repudiates confusion which looks like assurance, Kafka is able to open a spiritual potential within his writing, and, to this extent, Kafka's writing is like a sacred text which also effects such a potential. For Kafka, wisdom is the recognition of this potential.

To return to Cocteau, the crimes against death in Orpheus represent a working out of this spiritual potential as it may be read in Kafka, and the challenge to death's sovereignity provided by Cocteau's protagonists is astonishing in its disregard for death's powerful immanence and the tradition of death's inevitability. The fable of death, a genre to which Cocteau himself contributed, is marked by death's powerful immanence, so the "revolt on the other side" motif of his film marks a displacement away from death's power as shown by the traditional genre of fables like Cocteau's or Chaucer's "The Pardoner's Tale."[4.7]

Kafka and Cocteau share a desire for art that can break through the inertia of tradition; such an art is visionary in that it creates the conditions for vision, but any particular vision remains an incomplete, rhetorical concretization of this visionary potential. This

multifaceted but indefinite visionary potential is what postmodernist writing is capable of transmitting, a virtual image materialized as an image fragment. Cocteau invites comparison with Kafka by designing his realm of death after The Trial. Their "cinematic" styles pursue similar discursive strategies distinguishable by their intensely radical displacements from traditional sources, here the myth of Orpheus, but also by their resistance to closure.

Kafka and the Definite Material Image

The elements of the "Kafka affect," shock, fright, dread, and mystification, are textual effects provided by Kafka's use of the definite material image. This definite material image allows the reader to recognize the direction of Kafka's discourse. This recognition, however, is complicated by Kafka's use of the indefinite material image which tends either to heighten the effects of ambivalent immanence or to destabilize further the structures of material definiteness into a more indeterminate mimetic field, really an oneiric field of representation.

In many ways, the reader participates in the text by choosing to read either the effect of "heavy immanence" or of "satirical destabilization" in Kafka's writing, leading alternately to humorless or humorous evaluations. Nevertheless, both readings contribute to Kafka's

characteristic, ambivalent, immanence. The indefinite material image constitutes a self-reflexive textual strategy which hampers faith in mimetic imitation. Such a device occurs regularly in satiric or parodic writing: usually, parody or satire is characterized by this destabilization when the distinction is made that one form is "negative" (for example "parody") and the other "constructive" (for example "satire"), or vice-versa. Such generic confusions are indicative of systems that assign values to genres based upon mimetic naturalism, so that one form is called more "real" than another by reason of appeal to some imitation of normality, with that less "real" being considered as "failed" writing. Self-reflexive satire undermines its own normative assumptions so that it lacks the quality of "reform," and this lack is commonly cited as the criterion of "failed" satire.

This study applies the "satiric" term and recognizes in Kafka a strong satiric impulse not unlike Swift's use of satire in the last book of Gulliver's Travels. Swift's style in this portion of his text also has a dreamlike quality in that there remains an indeterminacy as to whether there are intelligent horses or merely dream projections of them, and this indeterminacy undermines the "normative" quality expected of conventional satire, since Swift's "normality" here is indistinguishable from an indeterminate vision. H. W. Desai has suggested other correspondences

between Swift's novel and Kafka's The Castle including: "a keen awareness of language in use creating meaning, a model that repudiates the previously prevalent referential view of language" (33).

The recognition of the oneiric field of representation and the recognition of self-reflexive satire in Kafka's writing provide the basis for the recognition of another textual effect in Kafka, humor. This humor, in turn, may contribute a "laughter affect" to the catalogue above, but it also allows a more precise generic assignation of Kafka's writing to a black humor/black fantasy continuum; real and unreal image qualities correlate to this spectrum, so that a story like "The Judgment," with its largely "natural" imagery, is considered black humor, while the unreal transformation at the heart of The Metamorphosis is considered black fantasy. This generic discussion will be developed at more length below. With these remarks to establish a context, an understanding of Kafka's use of the definite material image should be more accessible.

The concept of the "Kafka affect" is particularly useful as a means of identifying and correlating important motifs in Kafka's writing by considering that certain motifs tend to provoke similar effects. These similarities, in turn, indicate the common discourses related through these motifs, discourses connected with particular images. The commentaries on Kafka by Benjamin select particular motifs,

working toward a refinement of the discourse implied by them, and Deleuze and Guattari's study provides a selective systemization and further refinement of motifs, many of which were originally raised by Benjamin. Benjamin takes Kafka at his word when he reports: "he regarded his efforts as failures" ("Franz Kafka" 129). Consequently, Benjamin also finds in his work an experimental quality in that Kafka does not provide a clear political vision. A similar discursive conclusion emerges from Deleuze and Guattari as well.

One political motif raised by Benjamin and one read by Deleuze and Guattari is the motif of China, particularly "The Great Wall of China" and "An Imperial Message" (only the latter was published during Kafka's lifetime). The "China motif" in Kafka provides a definite material image which functions in a political way as a descriptive discourse. For Benjamin, the most material form of what he calls in Kafka a definition of "organization as destiny" comes about in "The Great Wall of China"; the immanent hierarchies of The Trail and The Castle arrive at a kind of crystallization in this material motif of "China" ("Franz Kafka" 123). Borges reads Zeno's temporal paradox against movement as the "formula of this famous problem [which] is, exactly, that of The Castle" ("Kafka and His Precursers" 106), but Kafka presents the problem of Zeno's paradox most explicitly in "An Imperial Message." Although "the emperor"

and "the imperial sun" may not directly name China, the very multitudinousness of the courts and the great city through which the messenger must continually travel tend to suggest China where the "imperial sun" is an important symbol.

Although Borges avoids a connection of Kafka to China in the context of Zeno's paradox, one of Borges' cited passages which he feels is related to Kafka's "voice" is a Chinese text by Han Yu about the inability of humankind to recognize a unicorn, and this results in the death of this supernatural animal of good omen (106-07; Jung, Psychology and Alchemy 464-5). Implicitly, then, this destruction of the ideal characterizes a material attitude, one born out in Borges' own story "The Garden of Forking Paths," a consummate execution of this China motif within a modern political context. Borges and Benjamin both recognize the significance of this China motif with respect to Kafka: this image of China functions as a material representation of political organization with the negative overtones of the futility of Zeno's paradox, a discontinuity which separates desire and action.

Karl Marx may be Kafka's source for this China motif in that Marx accuses Hegel of misprision by identifying the "Mongolian kingdom" as "'ecclesiastical'" and as a "'spiritual, religious kingdom' -- in contrast to the worldly empire of the Chinese" which for Marx is an appropriate representation regarding the history of the

"Mongolian kingdom" (Marx 114). All of this suggests both the appropriateness of the China motif as a political archetype and that Kafka's representation of the political state is closely bound with his use of the "China motif." Apparently, China for Kafka represents political immanence and political organization; the doomed destiny of this organization, its hopelessness, is focused in the problem of Zeno's paradox, an absolute discontinuity. If Kafka reads this discontinuity as an abyss between political will and the fulfillment of political action, then the discourse of this archetype of the China motif is specific to the extent that it shows humankind to be incapable of a successful political organization, hardly a comforting idea, but one with a visionary potential.

Sandbank discusses Brecht's assessment of Kafka's political vision:

> "We find in him," Brecht once wrote of Kafka, "strange disguises prefiguring many things that were, at the same time when his books appeared, plain to very few people. The fascist dictatorship was, so to speak, in the very bones of bourgeois democracies, and Kafka described with wonderful imaginative power the future concentration camps, the future instability of the law, the future absolutism of the state apparat, the paralysed, inadequately motivated, floundering lives of the many individual people; everything appeared as in a nightmare and with the confusion and inadequacy of a nightmare" (113).

Brecht characterizes Kafka's political sense as a prophetic nightmare, a vision which delineated the negative potential of political organization, one which, soon enough, became

actuality. Sandbank also discusses Muir's characterization of Kafka as an archetypal writer, but "to Muir's Marxist contemporaries this ahistoricism was anathema" (114). Even for Deleuze and Guattari, "The Trial is the dismantling of all transcendental justifications" (51).

Kafka's renunciation of political formulas earns him the charge of a lack of political vision, but perhaps it is history itself which is so well exemplified in the corrupted image of China. Kafka's use of this material image in the political sphere promotes a discourse of organizational hopelessness, and this realization of something close to political nihilism at the heart of Kafka's writing contributes to Kafka's "shock effect." The material image of China in Kafka promotes an effect of shock by disenfranchising political formulas as so much decay; perhaps, as Benjamin suggests, the kernel of Kafka's political alternative resides in "The Wish to Be a Red Indian" ("Franz Kafka" 119). Many other motifs in Kafka function as material images which contribute to the various facets of the "Kafka affect."

Shock and the Definite Material Image

Some other instances of Kafka's use of the definite material image to provide the shock effect or "affect" are Gregor's animal mask of possession in "The Metamorphosis,"

certain elements of "A Fratricide" (particularly its intensely sensual descriptions), lycanthropy, sexuality, and machines (particularly the one in the penal colony). Of these, probably the most difficult is Gregor Samsa's insect transformation in that it promotes several versions of a definite quality, while competition among these versions contributes a quality of indefiniteness. Thus, the image of Gregor as insect is most particularly indicative of Kafka's stylistic image play where definite and indefinite qualities are synthesized into a single image, one in which several particular images coexist.

Corngold's expressionistic designation of insect as metaphor has already been mentioned, and the lack of agreement concerning any definite description of this insect is strong evidence that the linguistic and metaphoric meaning of "insect" is pronounced in this text, rightly considered an expressionistic one on that basis. Nabokov's close reading produces drawings based on meticulous correlation of textual descriptions of a "beetle with human eyes" (Lectures on Literature 258 [editor's note]). The surreal qualities of this construction accord well with the intricate machine of the penal colony resting on sand.

The merging of human and insect qualities read by Nabokov lend support to a neurotic or even psychotic reading of Gregor's transformation since this image promotes a quality of utter alienation, a line of difference, or an

abyss, which separates Gregor from all other human contact. In fact, the tripartite division of The Metamorphosis easily reads as a progession in terms of this alienation: in "I" Gregor is outwardly transformed, but inwardly he still tries to deal with the world in human terms; in "II" Gregor acquires an understanding of his insect abilities and needs; finally, in "III" Gregor dies an insect death, becoming as inconsequential as any other bug carcass swept out with the trash (Ternes reads these similarly 226).

William Burroughs has proliferated insect metamorphoses throughout his writings, and there is little doubt of Kafka being the source.[4.8] Also, this sense of alienation is appropriate to Burroughs in that human figures become revealed as aliens: when their "human" quality becomes suspect, they dissolve into their "true" insect forms. One may follow in this continuity from Kafka to Burroughs a discourse of avariciousness, the insect image as a satirical device indicating petty ambitions unworthy of more "human" aspirations. Both Gregor Samsa and K. in The Trial exhibit a wealth of petty ambitions.

Still another image variant is identified by Nabokov when "the old charwoman calls him Mistkafer, a 'dung beetle'" (260). Although Nabokov foolishly dismisses this appellation as inconsistent with his own careful reconstruction, its presence in this text as a "name" applied to Gregor by an old woman connects the "dung beetle"

to the archetypal image of the "scarab." Budge's The Egyptian Book of the Dead reproduces "the scene from the sarcophagus of Seti I" in which the goddess Nut receives the disk of the sun from the outstretched mandibles of a scarab (cii-civ). This scarab recurs in Cirlot's description of "The Moon," the "eighteenth enigma of the Tarot" which "has as its function that of devouring what is transitory"; the associations of the Tarot with the Kabbala are well known, and "The Moon" is widely connected to ideas of intiation and witchcraft. Likely, Kafka's old charwoman pronounces these connections with her "dung beetle" address, for this beetle is widely considered the natural form or model for the scarab. The discourse of this image of the scarab signifies the "fated" quality of Gregor's transformation. In other words, Gregor's transformation into the form of the scarab already implies his death, the loss of his transitory mortal form.

Benjamin has noted the importance of the idea of fate in Kafka: "the transgression in the sense of the law is not accidental but fated, a destiny which appears [in The Trial] in all its ambiguity" (114). Deleuze and Guattari call attention to "the fragment of The Trial published under the title 'A Dream'" in which a painter inscribes a "J" upon a tombstone, and the figure of the painter provides for them evidence that this is a "fragment" of the novel. Welles also may have noticed this connection (this is discussed

further below), but its significance with respect to the novel is its presentation of a prophetic dream of doom, an image that provides evidence that K.'s death in The Trial is fated.

The fragment "A Dream" and the scarab are specific images indicating the fated qualities of these stories. Further, each image is connected to the other by the image of a "dream": Gregor awakes from "uneasy dreams" to discover his transformation into an insect (The Complete Stories 89). Such dreams also indicate that the whole matter of representation in Kafka refers to an oneiric field, for the explicit introduction of dreams clues the reader to their implicit presence elsewhere, and stories like "The Judgment" and "In The Penal Colony" present dream motifs without stating so, while those that mention dreams introduce the possibility that there is no awakening from them (i.e. Gregor never really awakens, he just dreams he awakes or moves into a state of lucid dreaming). This is always a possible variant interpretation in Kafka's stories; for example, Ternes uses Freudian projections as evidence of the uncanny in Kafka's writing, without considering that such projections only occur in dreams (of whatever type -- 224-26). Clearly, the image of the "dung beetle" provides a wealth of discourse and serves to reveal the importance of fate in The Metamorphosis. The equivalence of this to "A Dream" shows how Gregor and K. (in The Trial) are related.

Finally, there is the popular image of Gregor as "cockroach" which, while not precisely favored by the text (Nabokov feels commentators who use this do not "make sense" 258), is nevertheless instructive in that the cockroach is a familiar form of vermin. If commentators call Gregor a cockroach, this appellation arises out of their experience of vermin more than out of their experience of this text. This image of "cockroach" provides evidence of the Kafka affect of shock such that the transformation is shocking to commentators who look to their own experience rather than the text for a name. Moreover, this "cockroach" image shows creative participation in the text by these commentators who seem to instinctively or intuitively "know" that Gregor has become a cockroach because cockroaches are a common insect.

These forms of the central image of Gregor, of cockroach, of dream, of scarab, of surreal insect, and of metaphor each indicate definite and particular forms of discourse appropriate to their images; dream and metaphor seem capable of containing the other variants as a dream-archetype, but this archetype does not easily yield the variant discourses appropriate to each specific image. Nonetheless, somehow the text itself supplies these variants with their correlative discourses. Consequently, a unified interpretation is only possible by considering the aggregate of these images, but the discursive variety of these variants enforces a sense of indeterminacy.

In one sense or another, each variant is traceable to the text, but the discourses of these variants cannot be refined into a single view; rather the image of Gregor's transformation contains or juxtaposes several discursive indications which all cohabit in this image. This is precisely the way in which the reader is confronted with the opacity of an archetype. The reader focuses on one only by risking the loss of the others, for all have their relevance to the text. No wonder enough interpretive furor has arisen over Gregor Samsa to give rise to a "commentators' despair." This confusion provides ample testimony to the shock of Gregor's transformation.

This discussion of how the definite material image in Kafka contributes to "shock" concludes with the consideration of the equivalence of lycanthropic devices and machines in that both these image categories designate subjective animisms. Lycanthropy in Kafka presents animal subjects, and, more or less gradually, human characteristics become recognizable within these animal subjects. The Metamorphosis dramatically exemplifies this process since the whole first part of the novella is taken up with Gregor's resistance to his new animal form. This essentially surreal gesture is repeated to varying degrees in the animal stories, and readers become confronted with a material and sensual consciousness embodied by this animal/human juxtaposition. Such a representation of

consciousness as an animal existence is appropriate to the representation of dreams in which consciousness is often fragmented into several individual forms corresponding roughly to particular psychic concerns or mechanisms.

These dream representations are often subjected to graphic violence which dramatically portrays, through injury or even death of dream figures, nothing more than emphatic personal or linguistic psychic movements. The best example of this without animal or mechanistic images is the story of "The Judgment," in which the immanence of the father and the son's suicide indicate in dream language a form of father and son estrangement. The drowned son may quickly resurrect in some other dream since these dream effects are transitory and reactive. That critics do not read this story as a dream motif seems particularly naive when Kafka explicitly involves himself with dream processes eleswhere, and just because Kafka does not say that this story is a dream in no way prevents the application of principles of dream interpretation to this story.

Evidently, the "natural" qualities of this story serve to distract readers from the recognition of dream immanence, but "naturalism" also has its place in the dream process. There is a realistic effect of estrangement in this story which can be read either as "real" or as "dream," so this effect is overdetermined. However, the somewhat spectacular dream effect of the son's suicide is much less drastic than

the violence of an "actual" suicide, although it is possible that what occurs in dreams may also occur in life. Ultimately, the psychic concern of parental estrangement is the story's subject, but the investment of subjectivity into the completion of the suicide creates an effect of overwhelming parental power, which is not particularly realistic at all. This effect is appropriate to the dream which portrays parental power as an "affect," which Freud insists is often undiluted in dream form. The "overwhelming" power of the father in this dream indicates the powerful desire of the son for parental love and the sense that the father's withholding of such love will be harmful to the son. Such a dramatic effect as suicide, if realistic, would indicate a very disturbed personality, but such a dramatic affect in dreams is relatively commonplace, although one may find in this dream message an emphatic warning. The raw power of psychic elements as they are portrayed in dreams is intense since dream affect is often undiluted, but this is typical of dream representation.

Clearly, the reactive language of the dream seeks to shock the dreamer into comprehension, a comprehension which for the dreamer is always close at hand, but this representation in text without the sign that qualifies "this is a dream" is certainly shocking in itself. So it also goes with animal representations in Kafka, where these elements embody subjective or psychic components. As shown

above, a resistant dreamer may typically "see" an animal representation in a dream as a manifestation outside of the "dreaming" self. Kafka portrays this animal figure as a focus of subjectivity, and this results in the animal subject being consumed by undiluted affect, an undeniable intensification over the ordinary dream state.

Kafka quite successfully "adapts" the dream language of undiluted affect into the written language of text by eliminating any distance between the subject and the affect, so the reader "feels" the power of these psychic forces in a tactile fashion. The resolution of these powerful forces lies not in the literal text so much as in the contextual recognition that this is a dream text, and the elimination of distance between subject and affect is appropriate to the representation of dream consciousness which the reader encounters in these stories. Thus, mimetic "distortion" becomes appropriate when one recognizes that these stories are about psychic life portrayed in the language of dreams. Of course, without such a recognition, the pure affect portrayed in these stories is experienced by the reader as shock, and the reader is tempted to say that Kafka is exaggerating, that these stories are overly drastic, unreal, and so on, when the problem of interpretation resides in the mistaken choice of a mimetic standard of judgment being applied to stories that have an oneiric character. Nevertheless, these psychic representations remain relevant

to the mimetic field as well in that they do portray possible courses of real action, so this portrayal of psychic immanence contributes to a mimetic ambivalence as well.

Benjamin locates all of Kafka's writing within a "world theatre": "[t]he stage on which this drama takes place is the World Theater which opens up toward heaven" (121). The recognition of the oneiric field of representation is a more accurate contextual adjustment equivalent to Benjamin's contextual adjustment of world theatre which allowed him to explain the transparent qualities and undiluted affects (for Benjamin, "gestus") of Kafka's writing, in which "each gesture is an event -- one might even say, a drama -- in itself." Benjamin's gestus coheres with Deleuze and Guattari's "thresholds of intensities." This common recognition implies an expressionistic intensifcation in Kafka's writing, one clearly developed from the language of dreams.

What is appropriate to animal representation in some stories is also appropriate to machine representation in others, and the telling example is Kafka's story "In The Penal Colony" in which one finds qualities of self-animation in the terrible machine of execution. The machine's lust for destruction of the officer and its operation and self-dismantling out of all proportion to its careful programming links the animal with the mechanical.

If the animal stories demonstrate an animal/human surreal juxtaposition, then this story provides a machine/animal/human surreal complex which, when recognized, allows the significance of this story to be more accessible.

This story may be read as a dream of personality change with the elements and characters roughly corresponding to psychic structures. The intricate punishment machine, the officer, and the old commandant relate as an image structure suggestive of something like Freud's "censoring" faculty, a guilt impulse, death wish, whatever. The condemned man (a pleasurable desire) is aligned with the new commandant and explorer suggesting a hedonistic new order. The explorer particularly suggests a faculty of psychic self-awareness. This machine of guilt can no longer function once the explorer refuses his approbation of its function. One may say the machine only too obligingly slaughters its caretaker and dismantles itself in an emphatic demonstration of psychic synchronicity: the will to change is copresent with these images of destruction. This dream story is a numinous image realization of a part of the individuation process, a way of assimilating the shadow archetype; there are overtones of liberation and laughter as well as the sadness of how humans inflict pain on themselves.

These image motifs produce a psychic portrait of a dramatic moment in psychic life; as such, they produce a subliminal text because story elements resonate to psychic

structures believed to be part of the unconscious. These images describe psychic interaction in a metaphorical or allegorical way (through Hillman's sense of metaphor or Benjamin's sense of allegory, respectively). Direct or symbolic correspondences to the individual dream elements are not readily apparent, but an interpretative precision is overdetermined by the image play. A reader may not be aware immediately that this text is designed as a subliminal one, so the reader may react to this text on very different terms than on a recognition of this subliminal quality. The reader who does not make this recognition will likely be shocked by the story's graphic elements which convey dream affect.

This image of the penal-colony machine's self-destruction is another motif that figures prominently in Burrough's writing; one of his routines features a computer that runs the world, and his persona feeds in a subliminal command to dismantle itself.[4.9] Again, this image signals a liberation as the old order collapses. Burroughs not only incorporates Kafka's images of insect metamorphosis and machine-gone-mad, but he also adopts a similar discourse to Kafka in regard to these images, since he does not present any positive descriptions of political alternatives.

Much of the shock effect in Kafka derives from his subliminal textuality, an account of psychic life told with definite images that function on the personally archetypal

level of the shadow, on the threshhold of the unconscious, in the language of dreams. Images of organizational desire more than political ones, images of erotic desire rather than erotic interludes, images from the "blind side" of human consciousness reveal the hidden, ambivalent, and immanent structures that underlie civilization.

Fright and the Definite Material Image

Dreams of violent immanence as presentations of psychic affect also contribute to the fright "effect." A guilty terror of the father portrayed as nightmare in "The Judgment," K's inevitable death in The Trial, the portrait of the murderer Schmar, and a state of immanent gloom pervading The Castle provide some examples of how the use of the material image promotes fright. A childlike fear of the father is the undiluted affect in "The Judgment." The sense of deadly imminence that inhabits The Trial and that is supported by episodes like "The Whipper" dulls any sense of surprise for the reader when K. is finally executed, without even having been informed of specific charges against him.

This sense of imminent doom lends a dramatic quality to this novel even more severe than the dire fates of Greek classical tragedy where protagonists are granted choices that may lead out of their dire circumstances. This congruence to tragedy probably contributed to the desire to

adapt The Trial to other medial forms: Welles' film is discussed at length below, and Andre Gide also developed a dramatic adaptation (along with J.- L. Barrault) of the novel into a two-act play.

K. in The Trial never really seems to have a satisfying encounter with anyone in the novel, and from one dismal meeting to the next the sense of gloom grows stronger, until his alienation is so complete that it almost justifies his murder. This attitude is also developed in The Castle. Despite its more sociable ambience, this novel nonetheless manages to maintain an atmosphere of powerful immanence, and K. dies without having closed the distance between himself and this powerful edifice. When Kafka presents his portrait of Schmar in "A Fratricide," one finds the murderer in a state of possession: "he felt no cold; besides he was moving about all the time": here the intense description of Schmar's behavior provides the sense of imminence, a figure of jealous rage, irrevocably bent on murder (The Complete Stories 402). Kafka's portrayal of isolation and alienation with their excessive emotions yields numerous "frightful" images, contributing a disturbing quality to his subliminal texts.

Dread and the Definite Material Image

Two related ways in which Kafka promotes a sense of dread through the use of the definite material image include: 1) the development of the shadow archetype which connects to unconscious thresholds in the reader (discussed above) and 2) a participatory identification in which the reader is inscribed as voyeur, often to death scenes. An instance of this from Amerika was mentioned earlier; a discussion of other instances follows. One instance is unusual for Kafka. In "An Imperial Message" the message is sent to "you": the direct address to the reader as the destination of this message shows how Kafka was concerned with bringing the reader into a closer contact.

The discursive themes of responsibility and guilt are marked in other texts through the concretized image of the watcher or witness. One frames the narrative in The Trial:

> K. waited for a little while longer, watching from his pillow the old lady opposite, who seemed to be peering at him with a curiousity unusual even for her [and] his [K.'s] glance fell on the top story of the house adjoining the quarry [in which he will die] . . . the casements of a window there suddenly flew open; a human figure, faint and insubstantial at that distance and at that height, leaned abruptly far forward and stretched both arms still farther (1, 228).

These "witnesses" are clearly described by the narrator as outside of K., but their function of watching remains a function within K.'s subjectivity; he is continually watched throughout the story, although the reader is presented only

with these framing watchers. More strikingly, K.'s subjectivity is extended to the reader who is also watching K. in this text. In fact, watching opposite and looking down are two visual orientations of a reader to any text. This kind of orientation is made even more explicit in Karl's reading of the note in Amerika.

Kafka treats his witnesses more directly elsewhere, and this motif is familiar from his explicit treatment of it in "A Fratricide." "Why did Pallas, the private citizen who was watching it all from his window nearby in the second storey, permit it to happen? Unriddle the mysteries of human nature!"; later, this witness named for the goddess of wisdom, "choking on the poison in his body," calls to the murderer, "Schmar! Schmar! I saw it all, I missed nothing" (The Complete Stories 402, 404). The emphasis Kafka places here on the strange complicity between the witness and the criminal has in The Trial been worked out as a subjective motif (K. is aware of being watched), but the reader is drawn into this web of complicity, because the reader is continually presented with K.'s subjective ruminations and because at the beginning and end of the process (the arrest and the execution) an indefinite figure is inscribed into the text "watching," who is equivalent to the reader. Both the watchers and the readers share in the complicity of Pallas. This subtle discursive device does not allow the

reader to be detached from the text since the reader is a literal part of the text in this chain of subjectivity.

In this way, it becomes possible to know that K.'s world is our world, and this is a disturbing realization that cannot be dismissed by calling Kafka's novel a fiction, for Kafka has penetrated the psychic reality of our world and brought forth its image with its value, a mirror-image of connection to the evil in the world. That the message for "you" is unlikely to arrive represents a form of evil, an abyss between desire and action. This abyss is incarnated by the reading "witnesses" of murders, who will be jarred by their proximity to the graphic killings in "A Fratricide" and in The Trial. Kafka compounds a sense of dread from the activity of watching and from the activity that is watched, here murder. Kafka's texts operate on a kind of principle of psychic contagion; his focus on intensely intimate dreams connects to the reader's dreaming faculties and unconscious thresholds. This engagement of psychic faculties is unsettling, particularly with regard to death.

Mystification and the Definite Material Image

The final quality of the "Kafka affect" to be considered here is mystification, actually demystification. Kafka's use of the material image facilitates a literary

analysis of mythic displacement: the comparability of definite images shows the progression of displacement. Kafka effects a radical dissociation between his images and their traditional sources, but he also often includes those sources in his text. The image of Poseidon sitting at his cluttered desk embodies this incongruity in a comic fashion. If one is not quick to take up Gregor's transformation as metaphor, then one reads this change as a divine intervention, one not easily justifiable through traditional formulas.

A particularly illuminating instance of this demystifing process occurs when K. visits Titorelli, who is working on a portait of a judge with pastels. K.'s attention is drawn to an emblematic figure that the painter develops before him:

> that brightness brought the figure sweeping right into the foreground and it no longer suggested the goddess of Justice, or even the goddess of Victory, but looked exactly like a goddess of the hunt in full cry (147).

This image from the painter, an image which directly foreshadows K.'s death, operates almost in a cinematic manner of dissolving from the justifying images of "Justice" and (more ambivalent) "Victory" into an image of malevolent power. Here Kafka expressionistically reveals the stages of mythic displacement.

The human "Pallas" of "A Fratricide" chokes on the poison of murder, but this name suggestive of Pallas Athena,

like Artemis, is also connected with hunting. The traditional association of Athena with wisdom creates for the reader of "A Fratricide" a dilemma since the association with wisdom conflicts with the complicity of witnessing this murder. Kafka strips away the labels of justication to reveal the blind self-aggrandizement of power. The motifs of sacrifice described by Girard recur throughout Kafka's writing. Corngold remarks that Kafka's word for Gregor's transformed state derives from "the unclean animal not suited for sacrifice," but, nevertheless, Gregor's situation helps to unify his family, if only against him (10). Gregor, like Schmar, is shown through image to be possessed, and such possession precedes "sacrifice." The infernal machine of the penal colony becomes possessed, and with its final possession heralds the coming of freedom. Over and over Kafka's stories show the blood demanded by the powerful to work their political will, just as Girard's study of religion develops this conclusion, but Kafka will not preserve the sacred words which traditionally justify this exercise, except to place them in incongruous relief. Again, as with the image of "China," a political discourse goes along with these demystifying images, but it is only the discourse of the powerful demanding their blood tribute.

Kafka and the Indefinite Material Image

Kafka's uses of the definite material image show how many of his motifs carry numinous or immanent qualities resulting in a subliminal text since the archetypal qualities of these images engage unconscious psychological structures in the mind of the reader. Kafka's definite images are less imitative of the natural world than they are reflective of dream motifs and unconscious structures described in psychoanalysis. Kafka also employs indefinite images, and these indefinite images enhance the immanent and satirical qualities in his writing. Moreover, this indefinite quality reflects the process of writing itself, because the indefinite images are composed of definite components, just as in writing faith in details is meant to rhetorically support a more total vision which, in fact, writing cannot supply.

Just as the definite image implies indefinite qualities, so the indefinite image focuses attention on definite qualities as sources of indeterminacy or as rudiments of discourse. It has already been shown how this dynamic works in the instance of Gregor's insect transformation, so one may recognize how the "bug" of this novella is an indefinite image structure composed of definite components each of which contributes discursive insights into the larger structure, but none of these

individual elements alone is really sufficient to characterize the whole structure, which remains partly indeterminate. There are some other examples of indefinite motifs in Kafka which contribute to the ways in which writing comes to be viewed as a mediation of unconscious structures. In other words, the indeterminate qualities of writing are foregrounded, recalling the indefinite qualities of cognition itself.

Odradek

Odradek in "The Cares of a Family Man," possesses a "wooden" appearance, but it also has some kind of voice (The Complete Stories 428). This recalls the mechanical/animal surreal motif. The beginning of the description of this creature denotes the controversy surrounding its origins. This description begins on a note of indeterminacy and continues in an indeterminate way (427). A definite view of "Odradek" is given: "it looks like a flat star-shaped spool for thread" with a couple of rods connected to it so that "the whole thing can stand upright as if on two legs" (428). Thus standing and speaking are two organic qualities described, but saying it looks "like" a spool of thread only provides description through a mechanical metaphor, as does its wooden appearance; this is reminiscent of the bug metaphor applied to Gregor Samsa. Odradek relates to

domestic discourse; its appearances suggest a demonic quality ("extraordinarily nimble and can never be laid hold of"), and its locations possess threatening, Freudian overtones ("rolling down the stairs" 429, "leaning . . . against the banisters" 428). Odradek's standing upright mimics the erection, and its presence on the stairs implicates it in a Freudian symbol for copulation (Freud 390). The suggestion of its presence "right before the feet of my children" and "the idea that he is likely to survive me" (something children do) direct this creature's implicit threat against the children, the product of the sexual union (429). Perhaps Odradek might choke them, as "ordinary" household objects can do; indeed, its unobtrusive but disconcerting presence is analogous to ordinary objects which can cause fatal accidents. Odradek remains a cipher, but one connected through textual innuendo to sexual guilt and family responsibilities, the Oedipal "crucible" of immanence.

"Before the Law"

"Before the Law" as parable, as part of The Trial, and as dream in Orson Welles' film of the novel provides an example of indefinite discourse based on an indefinite image. The explicit story is a cipher, and each suggested interpretation is negated, although the commentary also

points out specific qualities which bear upon its interpretation. This parable paradoxically presents its own meaning in an indefinite way. One may suggest interpretations which are not found in the commentary; for example, a violent overthrow of the guard seems to accord well with the presentation of the law in the novel as an instrument of violent power. When K complains of mistreatment he is rewarded with the whipping of the "mistreater." Even though the guard warns against violence, this may only be a bluff, or, alternatively, there may be some other way to deal with the other guards.

This threat of the guard that other, more powerful guards stand behind him is like Heracles' confrontation with the "hydra": when one head is removed, two more take its place, yet Heracles found a solution to the threat of the Hydra's physical power. Actually, this image of the Hydra is particularly appropriate to the description of the pernicious qualities of psychological complexes, and it is possible that the image of the Hydra survives as an archetype in dreams. Following this analogy of the Hydra suggests that Kafka may be using the term "the Law" in an ambivalent way in that the structure of the law is widely recognized as a social institution, and the definite qualities called up by the term suggest courts, judges, and so on, but Kafka uses the law to indicate unconscious structures or archetypes.

Kafka's involvement with the shadow archetype suggests this kind of unconscious immanence, for the shadow does intimidate its subject, and, further, the intimidating power of the shadow derives from the subject's own power. This accords with the story's insistence that the door which stands before the man is his own door to the law. If this first level of unconscious "initiation" involves the problem of intimidation, then other levels may also appear to partake of this same quality because they represent further encroachments into the unconscious projected by this vision which has not yet solved the problem of intimidation. In other words, the other "guards" may not be guards at all, but they all are multiplications of the original guard so long as the man fears the guard before the door to the law. This line of reasoning alerts the reader to the religious sense of the term "the Law" as indicative of essential qualities of human experience. Perhaps this involves the conflict of the "spirit" and the "flesh" or the precession of archetypal psychic structures, but the text will not confirm any interpretation, even as the story directs the reader's attention to such ideas.

Girard's study makes clear the connections between religious institutions and the political system of the law; it is also a well known tenet of Mandeville and of Trotsky that religious structures have a political nature. Thus, the institution of "justice" suggested by the term "the Law"

nevertheless portrays an appropriate correlate to both unconscious and religious structures. Kafka's use of the term "the Law" is an exquisite example of the material image: its surface is clear, but opaque. Its archetypal significance involves more than its surface, and these levels of meaning are all supported by the text, which in the novel is presented by a priest. "The Law" swallows the world, as in the biblical fall. Its indefinite quality is enhanced by the independent, though related, levels of significance which the term embraces. Different meanings are suggested by the vain expositions given to the story.

There is still another definite quality which contributes to the total effect of indefinition, and this is the possibility of a real solution to this parable. One may suggest the solution of violence out of frustration with this text which itself portrays violence. However, one may reject this theme of violence as insufficient to disclose the meaning of "Before the Law." Although the text itself does not provide an answer and although its ingenious commentaries provide the intimation that there may not be an answer, this text nevertheless constitutes an invitation to find an answer. This text does not directly indicate that there is no answer; consequently, there may be an answer to the dilemma of "the Law." Such an elucidation is beyond the scope of this study, but this apocryphal parable may indeed contain some solution. If an answer were discovered, then

"the law" would become a more definite image structure. Nonetheless, "finding" a solution and "proving" its exactitude may remain a difficult matter; that is, it may only contribute another definite quality to the indefinite composite. The possibility of an answer contributes to the indefinite quality of this image, just as the indefinite quality of this image hinders a definite interpretation.

Kafka's work is a paradoxical writing based on paradoxical structures, but these structures do not prohibit the elucidation of valid interpretations. Instead, these structures provide a context which situates the depth and complexity of the problem of descriptive writing. Kafka's paradoxes deny the naivete demanded of readers by naturalistic writers; insofar as these structures are accurate in their depiction of the problems of representational writing they are expressionistic. Kafka implies a "germ" of truth enclosed within apparent contradictions, a revelation and a concealment, an exposition of the technology of writing.

Orpheus and The Trial

An additional, if controversial, use of the indefinite image in Kafka involves allusions, indefinite allusions. Kafka's use of the definite material image radically transforms traditional images as in "Poseidon," but there

may also be a correlate to this radical transformation in his use of the indefinite image as well.

Probably the strongest indication of such a strategy occurs in The Trial where the curious relation between K and the women of this novel suggests an "invisible" Bacchae. This gesture is recapitulated in other texts related to The Trial (Welles, Moravia, Bertolucci) in that all these portray three sexually charged encounters with women (exceptions are familial: K.'s niece in The Trial [novel and film] and Marcello's wife in The Conformist [novel and film]), suggesting that women, or the desire for them, may be the agency of K's destruction, as in the Greek tragedy. Emphasis is provided in The Trial by the figure of the goddess of the hunt and by the crowd of ravenous girls at Titorelli's studio. Should one take the figure of the apparently homosexual painter surrounded by young girls as Kafka's representation of Orpheus, "originator of homosexual passion," who was torn apart by Thracian women at a Dionysiac orgy (Rose 255)? Further, this identification with Orpheus may extend to K. himself, since Titorelli represents a concentration of motifs in which K. has been implicated (see below).

Cocteau may have read Titorelli in this way, signalling this recognition in his film by connecting the bureaucratic motifs of Kafka with his transformation of the Orpheus legend in which a group of women called the Bacchantes

threaten the poet Orpheus. There are several indications that Cocteau's film provides a reading of Kafka, since the revolt of the agents of death parallels K.'s revolt against the agents of the law and since Kafka's use of "the Law" to indicate a realm of deadly unconscious impulses parallels Cocteau's recreation of the realm of death (which is reached through mirrors) in his film.

Todorov's problem in considering Kafka as a writer of the fantastic arose because Todorov read either uncanny or marvelous structures in Kafka's writing, but the subtle participation of mythological forces as references in this indefinite way invalidates Todorov's denial of the copresence of the uncanny and the marvellous in Kafka's writing. At least with regard to The Trial, there appears to be a group of dionysiac references providing a mythic undercurrent to this novel's fairly mundane events.

Kafka's focus upon women reveals a strategy of male appropriation in a homosocial society in which these women are held by the courts. Also, Titorelli's figure of the goddess of the hunt is supposed to be a representation of a judge. A more detailed discussion of the relation of The Bacchae to The Trial is given below, but indications are this play and the Orpheus legend become indefinite mythic components of the novel and represent yet another form of Kafka's strategy of mythic transformation and displacement.

In conclusion, there are several ways in which the indefinite material image operates in Kafka's writing. First, there is the indeterminacy that arises with respect to apparently definite material images (Gregor). Second, there are indefinite modes of description of which definite components yield discursive clues, but which remain indeterminate (Odradek). Third, there is the presentation of indeterminate, parabolic discourse ("Before the Law"). Fourth, Kafka's allusiveness can also take an indefinite form (Orpheus). Finally, to these ought to be added the presentation of an indefinite text, particularly with respect to Kafka's novels since these novels were not put into final form by Kafka himself.

The Trial is not only a text about corruption, but is itself a corrupt text. Further, its status as a corrupt text places it in a structural line of descent with other precurser texts to The Trial, notably Petronius' The Satyricon (an earlier novel developing the theme of innocence and guilt as well as the presentation of dream) and Swift's Gulliver's Travels (apparently gutted in places by printers to delete direct criticism of the British government). Thus, there arises the possibility that Kafka's injunction to destroy these writings is actually a self-reflexive production of the indefinite text, one left

to chances of publication or destruction. Whether he wished to do so cannot really be determined, but these texts remain, and they remain in this company of other texts to which they bear thematic and structural relations.

Taken together, all these strategies of indefiniteness in Kafka's writing indicate how great a part indeterminacy played in his idea of literary representation, and how this indeterminacy is an essential quality of writing itself. It is now possible to see more clearly how the effect of paradoxical ambivalence at the heart of Kafka's writing has been achieved. Kafka's expressionistic use of definite and indefinite images emphasizes the imperfection inherent in writing to represent human existence. Kafka represents the wish to order existence as an indeterminate dream, and he creates a correlation between the technologies of dream and of writing. Just as Freudian dreams are structured by wishes, Kafka's reactive writing invests his texts with an archetypal substance, but, paradoxically, the very complexity of this substance produces an opaque ambivalence. Nevertheless, Kafka expressionistically shows how writing and dream are equivalent technologies, distilling thought into provocative image complexes.

The Novel and the Film of Kafka's The Trial

Expressionistic literature poses special problems for the adaptation of literature into film. A naturalistic novel seems to move more easily into cinematic portrayal because the story element lends itself to direct reproduction, but actually the mode of expressionism in writing has more in common with the particular qualities of cinematic representation. Expressionistic writing and film are well suited to each other at the formal level of the ways in which these media structure perception for their audiences. The problems of expressionistic adaptation force directors to make a more comprehensive use of the film medium in these portrayals. Many of these problems arise from the powerful tradition of naturalistic mimesis in film; consequently, directors must work against this aesthetic inertia to discover more effective means of cinematic representation. This naturalistic "habit of reception" of film audiences is overcome when film is required to do more than to simply convey a story. These strategies of expressionistic adaptation instruct the audience about particular qualities of signification in film.

Orson Welles' adaptation of Franz Kafka's The Trial makes use of a variety of cinematic capabilities to render not only the story but also the sense of defamiliarization imparted by the novel to its readers. Although Welles' film

was not widely shown and, even today, remains fairly obscure, its production in 1962 coincides with early "new wave" films that were also concerned with expressionist writing including Godard's Contempt (1962 -- Alberto Moravia's A Ghost At Noon) and Resnais' Last Year At Marienbad (1960 -- screenplay by Robbe-Grillet). Kafka's The Trial influenced Alberto Moravia's novel The Conformist, which explores a situation thematically related to Kafka's story and which also employs a motif of three sexually charged encounters during the course of its telling (three different women), which marks its connection to Kafka's novel.

Similarly, Welles' film The Trial makes use of images of statuary (a yard full of statues, a shrouded statue that K. is led past on his way to be executed) and so does Bertolucci's The Conformist (1969 -- at the ministry giant busts are carried through the hall, a bust of Mussolini is dragged on a chain through the street by a partisan motorcyclist), and these startling images of statuary, as opposed to the naturalistic photographing of a statue which occurs in many films, suggest an additional intertextual relation between these films, besides the link between Moravia and Kafka carried through in these adaptations.

Welles' use of statuary emphasizes the oppressive ambience of Kafka's world: the yard full of statues is an image correlate to the rooms full of petitioners to the law,

a metaphor of people turned to stone, while the shrouded statue ironically "covers" the ideals statues are used to represent, and K.'s execution is made more arbitrary by this mark of removal of ideal justifications. Bertolucci's development of statuary is oppositional to Welles': where Welles indicates a long-standing oppression, Bertolucci uses a rise-and-fall motif. As the fascists take over, they erect statues to their achievement, but these statues are torn down when the fascists are defeated. These two approaches are connected by a common discourse of vain pride. Welles' disused statuary correlates to the ironic, temporary quality of Bertolucci's statuary: both suggest the lack of value that the material of stone is supposed to preserve. Taken together, The Trial and The Conformist both as novels and as films form a significant core that portrays the expressionistic approach to the naturalistic genre of the historical novel, an approach with a strong satirical component. The Trial as novel and as film participates both through thematics and through intertextuality in a number of expressionistic projects that portray, and often satirize, the nature of our political existence.

The Trial presents one of Kafka's approaches to an expressionistic treatment of the historical novel, a form often thought to have originated with Scott's Ivanhoe. This partly explains K.'s encounters with the three women in The Trial who all seem, at one time or another, to be hopeful

that K. might be helpful to them, only to face an ultimate disappointment. K.'s inability to "rescue" these women from their predicaments satirizes those literary heroes who easily effect such "rescues" and confuses the identification with respect to K. of whether he is one of the oppressed or one of the oppressors. This is a problem of the shadow archetype which is cast as a menacing presence, especially in the parable "Before the Law."

K.'s agonizing over his "guilt" or "innocence" becomes heightened during these sexually charged encounters, and this "neurotic" ambivalence leads to his isolation from these women. These encounters point out K.'s personal and, consequently, social ambivalence leading to the important discursive theme of political responsibility in this novel. The "paranoia" of K.'s mindset and of the world he inhabits are ultimately interchangeable, and there seems to be no way out of this predicament; K. is led to his death. It is both satirically amusing and instructive that all K.'s agony and its futile course allow him to live more fully with an increased intensity and awareness that, no doubt, was unavailable to him during his humdrum existence before his arrest. This is evident in the text from his remarks and attempts early on to regain his normal routine in spite of his arrest, especially in the scenes at the bank.

This discursive theme of responsibility, with all its guilty vacillations, is marked in the text through the

concretized image of the watcher or witness that frames the narrative. As discussed above, K. is definitely the object of scrutiny within the narrative, but the witnesses of the novel also indefinitely suggest the readers of this novel who also scrutinize K. These spectator images invite the adaptation of this novel into film, since the novel is constructed around similar parameters to those which are basic to cinematic expression.

The adaptive process of bringing expressionistic writing into expressionistic cinema should be characterized as the intermedial transposition of discourse. In other words, since discourse rather than story is the more crucial quality of expressionistic writing, the challenge of adapting expressionistic writing to cinema involves choosing cinematic devices appropriate to the verbal devices which convey the discourse of an expressionistic text. With regard to expressionism, the chief function of story involves the identification of the text, and the movement from one medium into another is initially accomplished through the transference of story elements: the story of the novel becomes the story of the film, more or less, and changes in plotting may indicate discursive strategies of adaptation. However, although the transference of story elements is basic to expressionistic adaptation, the justification remains discursive in that these story elements contain discursive elements which ought to be

preserved to preserve the discourse. In an extreme case, one may substitute story elements so long as they convey a discourse similar to the one promoted by the source text. Thus, the expressionistic adaptation could conceivably portray a different story than the source text, but any differences would need to preserve the discursive elements present in the source text so that, ultimately, a "different" story would not be so different that it would prevent the recognition of its source text.

With respect to Welles' adaptation, Kafka's discursive device of inscribing the reader into the text is significant, and a fitting cinematic presentation of The Trial ought not to overlook this fundamental discursive strategy. Indeed, Welles seeks to overdetermine this device of Kafka's inscription of his reader by developing forms of audience participation in his film.

In the first place, the story element, or literality, of the image of the watcher is portrayed in the film, which shows the old lady watching K. as well as the more surreptitious watching of K.'s landlady and fellow employees during the arrest sequence. Of course, the film audience cannot help but be spectators, and Welles expressionistically reduces the distance between the audience and characters by his use of many close-up shots, reflecting the expressionistic concern with portraiture. The final image of the watcher (the figure in the upper

story) is omitted because Welles has so overdetermined the strategy of the watcher in the film, that the final execution sequence is presented more or less directly to the audience (the knife is passed back and forth, but not the actual death, accomplished by dynamite in the film).

For The Trial, Welles brought out his own expressionistic trademark: the 18.5 mm "deep focus" lens that approximates, by both mimicking and distorting, the field of human vision and that had produced the memorable image of Kane's dying lips ("Rosebud"). This lens was also used in Touch of Evil, and although both Griffith and Renoir had explored its use, Jacobs remarks that Welles' use of it may have been the most spectacular (268). So the film audience would view The Trial in a way closely resembling the way they viewed the outside world. That this lens constitutes an expressionistic device becomes clear in the context that naturalistic convention had situated the image differently with other lenses, so the ultra-natural approach of deep focus here breaks with the cinematic convention of situating the image through other means, means that might be considered as ways of enhancing distance between the film and its audience, means of investing film with an "aura." Welles' use of deep focus destroys this aura and reduces the distance between audience and film, allowing the subjective connection of Kafka's prose to function within this visual context.

Perhaps Welles' most telling discursive device to enhance the connection of the audience's subjectivity to that of K. may be derived from the short piece called "A Dream" which appears to be an excised segment of The Trial (discussed above). This involves the use of the dream, of an actually subjective, oneiric representation. Especially startling is Welles' textual innovation (there are several) in which K. shows himself to be particularly aware of a certain dream, one which frames Welles' film within a deja vu narrative structure. The nightmare of K.'s in which a painter inscribes a "J" upon a tombstone, implying that the grave is for "Joseph K.," is replaced by Welles with a dream sequence of "Before the Law." The initial sequence in the film uses a "pin screen" animation technique to illustrate Welles' abbreviated version of "Before the Law," the parable of The Trial that is related to K. by the priest shortly before K.'s execution. The visual difference of the "pin screen" sufficiently suggests a dream encounter, and Welles remarks in his voiceover narration that the logic of this story has been called "the logic of a dream -- a nightmare" (Brecht's remarks on Kafka, mentioned above, may also have contributed to this term). At this point in the film, Anthony Perkins, who plays K., opens his eyes, presumably awakening from this dream, and the arrest sequence begins.

Welles invests the entire film with this oneiric quality through his deja vu narrative structure. The effect

of an absolutely oneiric presentation is usually credited to Bergman's Persona which appeared four years later (two years before The Trial, Resnais' Last Year at Marienbad presented fairly demarcated sequences of objective, though expressionistic, mimesis and subjective fantasy; some might consider this closer to Welles' approach). The narrative time of the novel is given explicitly; "am I to show now that not even a year's trial has taught me anything?" (226). However, Welles compresses both time and space so that day and night divisions and spatial relationships suggest an immediate unfolding -- perhaps two or three days or a single dream. Kafka's treatment of space emphasizes hallways, thresholds, and rooms both very small and very large; Welles closely follows this representation except that he minimizes spatial distances so that all places seem to be in nearly the same location, an effect varied in Kafka between distance and closeness.

There is some difference in emphasis between the approaches of the novel and of the film: Kafka allows objective effects more of a part in his basically subjective approach, as discussed above (and for this reason, Kafka's prose is often considered as realism), but Welles through the dream mode puts more emphasis on the totality of subjective presentation. One can hardly accuse Welles of being heavy-handed when so many have missed the thoroughly subjective context of Kafka's presentation. This dream

device in Welles represents a strong reading of Kafka's text, and it allows the audience a broader recognition of this extremely subtle quality in Kafka.

When the story has progressed to the cathedral sequence, antecedent to K.'s execution in the film, this deja vu structure of Welles becomes revealed. In the novel, the chaplain tells K. the parable:

> you are deluding yourself about the Court . . . in the writings which preface the Law that particular delusion is described thus: before the Law stands a doorkeeper . . ." (213).

In the film, Welles, who plays Hassler the barrister, shows up at the cathedral after K. arrives saying, "I have left my sickbed," and he procedes to relate the parable to K. During this relation, the "pin screen" animation of "Before the Law" is projected upon both Perkins and Welles. When Welles as Hassler asks K. if he knows the story, K. replies with a contemptuous air that he does; the animation projection continues anyway with Hassler laying particular emphasis on the doorkeeper's final words, referring to the door to the law: "and now I am going to shut it!" Hassler identifies himself with the guard. Here K.'s knowledge of the story indicates his remembrance of the dream in which the parable was related to him. K. has remembered the dream, which he seems to have found distasteful, and the event of this remembrance is situated in the context of a dream itself, of Welles' oneiric presentation. Welles himself has remarked that his introduction of the story at

the outset solved "the technical problem" of waiting too long before introducing this parable, but his expertise with the integration of this element develops a powerful structure discursively coherent with Kafka's own (Fry 10).

The film portrays the parable as a dream within a dream, and this parable represents a deja vu event. Freud in his The Interpretation of Dreams discusses the dream within a dream and concludes that the material of the dream within (the dream that the dreamer dreams he is dreaming) is a true representation, the affirmation of the reality of this event (374). There is an implicit assertion in Welles' film that deja vu should also be considered a form of lucid dreaming, particularly insofar as the deja vu dream is one capable of "coming true," of being manifested as fact. Welles' dream context as a cinematic device confirms both Kafka's overall subjective situation of his narrative and Welles' recognition of Kafka's narrative context. Moreover, Welles' situation of this parable at the very beginning of the film quickly brings his audience into contact with this significant element from the novel.

This is not the first time the dream-within-a-dream, deja vu device appears in film, for it figures importantly in Cavalcanti's Dead of Night (1945 -- Katz, 218).[4.10] This film is a ghost story anthology that is framed within a deja vu narrative context, and it seems to have been the source of numerous Twilight Zone tales and of feature films which

have told the story of the murderous ventriloquist dummy (Magic), which Katz indicates was directed by Cavalcanti. It is likely that Welles was familiar with this film, a British production, since he worked there.

Altogether, Welles overdetermines the expressionist discursive strategy of the subjective world view by the careful adoption of Kafka's literal imagery into his film, by the technical devices of the deep-focus lens and repeated close-ups, and by a dreamlike presentation, a presentation nonetheless firmly grounded in Kafka's writing. This produces an effective discursive fitting of the novel to the film. This subjective aspect of the adaptation also helps to explain such inaccurate characterizations of Welles' The Trial as this by Cook:

> The Trial (1962) became the only one of his films since Kane over which Welles exercised total control. His customary visual complexity notwithstanding, the results are disappointing. Shot in black-and-white in the streets of Zagreb, Yugoslavia, and in the fantastic Gare d'Orsay in Paris, the film finally fails to evoke the antiseptic modern hell of Kafka's novel, perhaps because of some disparity between the world-views of the two artists (374).

If "antiseptic" cannot be applied to Welles' film, neither can it be applied to Kafka's writings, for Kafka seldom shrinks from the portrayal of dirt and general tawdriness (compare with the final sequence of The Metamorphosis). This word "antiseptic" which connotes hospital fright functions as a mark of subjective contact operating in both the film and the novel from the consideration of a

"paranoid" character in the presentation, ultimately incorrect. While it is true that Welles remarked on "his own 'lack of profound sympathy for Kafka'" and that the choice of this novel was more the producers' than his preference, it seems that the aesthetic sympathies of Welles and Kafka were more congruent (Leaming 561).

In fact, in a Cahiers interview, Welles explains why he considers K. to be "guilty":

> He belongs to something which represents evil and which is a part of him at the same time. He is not guilty of what he's accused of, but he's guilty all the same: he belongs to a guilty society, he collaborates with it. But I'm not a Kafka analyst (Fry 9).

Although Welles is willing to concede some distance between himself and Kafka, one should not take the impression that he was unhappy with his subject: "say what you like, but The Trial is the best film I have ever made . . . I have never been so happy as when I was making that film" (Fry 10). Obviously, both Kafka and Welles possessed an understanding of the expressionist mode. Whether by design, instinct, or accident, Welles used appropriate discusive strategies to adapt this novel into cinema. A second, and final, discursive strategy in the adaptation will help to bear out this expressionist accord.

Recall Benjamin's remarks concerning the withering of aura and the expressionist equality of images; these are echoed by Hillman in one of his essays in Facing the Gods: "necessity has no image because it works in each and every

image . . . the archetype is wholly immanent in the image itself" (10). In Hillman's archetypal psychology, all psychic images are considered equal. Hillman's idealistic study approximates Benjamin's radical, materialistic formulation. As discussed above, Kafka's writings exhibit a form of mythical play that radically detaches the archetype from its traditional significance. In The Trial, this detachment functions through two particular devices: 1) the apparition of "Artemis" during the interview with Titorelli, the painter, and 2) the sexual encounters with the three women. Ultimately (2) is related to (1), but this relation is subtle and is representative of a radical revision of mythic sources.

When K. visits Titorelli, who is working with pastels on a portrait of a judge, K.'s attention is drawn to an emblematic figure that the painter develops before him: that brightness brought the figure sweeping right into the foreground and it no longer suggested the goddess of Justice, or even the goddess of Victory, but looked exactly like a goddess of the Hunt in full cry (147).

Here there is a double transformation and one suggestive of a cinematic movement. First, the figure of a presumably male judge becomes transformed into a feminine figure: this is suggested by the portrayal of the judges as male in the novel and satirically enhanced by the suggestion of Titorelli's homosexuality -- K. seems to be obtaining

paintings in lieu of a seduction. Second, the background emblem of the figure of Justice or of Victory is transformed into the vision of the huntress, now occupying the forground and characterizing the judge.

These transformations are an indication of the appropriation of the feminine by the masculine judges and of the metamorphoses of already strong feminine archetypes into bloodthirsty ones (of course, justice and victory already mark some degree of male appropriation). For convenience, a reference to this huntress as "Artemis" accords with Kafka's repeated uses of Greek archetypes in his writings. Recall, again, Pallas from "A Fratricide" connected with another male figure and associated with Athena. Rose reports an obscure story in which Athena, in self defense, kills her playmate Pallas (a girl), but that the origins of the connection of the name Pallas to Athena are quite obscure (112). However, Hillman's essay explicity discusses Athena as representative of social norms and normality and as opposed to Dionysus (29-31). Both Artemis and Athena are associated with weapons and with virginity, or, in the specific terms of The Trial, with innocence. Unfortunately, it is a cruel innocence indeed with which K. is confronted, for in both the novel and in the film the recognition by K. of this image foreshadows his execution, not only to the audience but to K. himself, and after this interview K. appears grimly to expect his death.

In the film, Welles has K. report the image transformation to the audience. After K.'s recognition, Welles somewhat alters Kafka's narrative sequence, making K's execution more imminent from this event, and we see K. leaving Titorelli's place through a slatted wooden tunnel, resembling a cattle run, and on through a stone tunnel, resembling catacombs, until he arrives in the street before the cathedral where the penultimate sequence to his death takes place, with the priest and Hassler presenting "Before the Law" (discussed above). Here Welles' adaptive technique can be described as the use of concision, dramatization, and expressionistic concentration of the novel, all leading to a heightened emphasis while preserving important elements of the literal text. Indeed, the only authority of the text's sequence is Max Brod's, so little more need be said on this matter. The whole significance of the image transformation devolves from the oppositional play of these images, of men portrayed as bloodthirsty virgins. Such transformations are radical, not progressive; the images are not altered, but, instead, are portrayed as their opposites, and this effectively detaches them from their traditional justifications. "Justice" becomes a cruel ruse, a joke, both literal and satirical.

The encounters with the three women relate to the above images in that these women are not virgins, but victims of male appropriation; in all three cases their functions are

to service men, usually men connected with the law. Their lack of innocence promotes their apparent, sexually aggressive desire for K., who desires them, but something always seems to interfere with any consummation, usually related to their service functions: one is tired, another cannot free herself for more than a moment from the law student who supervises her, and Leni always has to run to fulfill the lawyer's whims. These women certainly function as emblems of a Freudian identification which Girard has shown functions as the source of rivalries (173). Like K., they are portrayed as victims of the law. If they are considered in their emblematic function, they represent the rivalry that K. always loses, and, further, they serve to intensify K.'s personal agonizing over his own innocence or guilt by intensifying K.'s sexual desires.

It is important to remember that when K. becomes angry (and unconcerned with sex) the system seems to accommodate him in small ways: for example, K. complains that one of his arresting officers stole from him, and the officer is whipped; in the film, K. fires his lawyer, and the lawyer leaves his sickbed, apparently seeking a reconciliation until K.'s continued contempt drives the lawyer to dismiss him to his execution. Such angry intimidation of the forces of the "law" has an antecedent in Poe's tale "William Wilson."[4.11] Within this context, the women may be seen as functioning to keep K. in a tranquil, but frustrated state,

much like the women themselves who are calm, but always seeking something from K., and the women then seem to function as either unwitting, de facto agents of the court or as deceptive, malicious counterparts to K.'s male persecutors. In the sense that they can be viewed as contributing to K.'s ultimate destruction, they are like the women in The Bacchae. In this case, there is another oppositional transformation, for these women remain calm, but they figure in K.'s destruction. There is also a correlation to the image of Titorelli as Orpheus, surrounded by ravenous young girls (suggested above). K.'s visit to Titorelli foreshadows his execution, and this image of Titorelli likely concentrates, in a more literal crowd of women, K.'s own encounters with these women, which have been diffused throughout the novel.

K. is only executed after he has essentially lost his will to resist: he does not fight for his life, even if he will not take it himself, refusing the proffered knife of his executioners (this much resistance remains). If The Bacchae represents the unseen mythic image that drives The Trial, an image that is suggested through a linear and oppositional transformation of women who apparently would be kind to K., then this bloodthirsty image of the women of The Bacchae merges with that of the bloodthirsty "Artemis" in Titorelli's drawing. It follows that the significance of virginity which connects in an oppositional way the women

with the drawing no longer possesses any force, and the image of virginity is radically detached from its traditional justification. It also follows that the feminine images of violence are masks for a masculine violence that has appropriated, perhaps indeed invented them, another radical detachment of these images from their traditional meanings.

When the Dionysiac images of The Bacchae become merged with the Athenian theme of normality, when these ideas that can only function as differentiated ideas are overlaid on each other, the order or pantheon collapses into itself, and all these are detached from their traditional meanings. The image that results becomes some dark archetype of a destroying mother ("meter" -- Hillman 27), a Kali, the image of pure fright inhabiting the flesh.

> What scared you all into time? Into body? Into shit? I will tell you: "the word." Alien Word "the." "The" word of Alien Enemy imprisons "thee" in Time. In Body. In Shit. Prisoner, come out. The great skies are open. (Nova Express 12)

This passage from the opening of William Burrough's novel illustrates a version of this dark image, similar to the image nexus of The Trial above. These writings represent a kind of convergence of expressionist writing, a material image underlying the systems of justification that becomes visible when these systems are detached from their traditional significations. Thesis IX in Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosopy of History" on "Angelus Novus" strikes a

similar chord (257-58). Diverse voices are warning of political and cultural disaster. Perhaps Kafka was the first to bring forth this image with its dark message, but he certainly is not alone.

How does Welles handle the transition of these images into his film? He accomplishes this largely through the discursive strategy of respecting Kafka's text, and although he does make a few changes, these are in no way dissonant with Kafka's images. Welles does change Kafka's plot sequence by having Leni give K. the name of Titorelli for a contact, instead of the Assistant Manager at the bank. This suggests that Welles is connecting the women more explicitly to K.'s destruction, since the visit to the painter provides the foreshadowing image of K.'s death. Leni's intention seems to be helpful, but it is a short trip in the film from Titorelli to K.'s death.

Welles also explicitly connects Freud to Kafka's story through the use of a Freudian slip during the arrest sequence. The police inquire of K. his connection with pornography since K. has brought it up by accident when they are looking through his drawers [pun]; then, they search his record player which K. hastily refers to as his "pornograph." Coming early in the film, this reference suggests the difficulties that will arise with respect to the issue of identification, which, as was shown above, is a legitimate Freudian concern in The Trial. Naturally, all of

K.'s guilty vacillations which are beginning with this remark become associated with the guilt complex, and this association is somewhat controversial. Nabokov would have all interpretation of Kafka purged of Freudian connections (256). Ternes disagrees, and careful attention reveals, as discussed above, how some of these connections are valid. The actual dialogue in the film does not seem to violate Kafka's discourse by directing the audience to Freud's writings as well as Kafka's (225-26).

Another innovation of Welles is the introduction of a computer sequence, the mechanical image of systematization, but this is equivalent to Kafka's machine of execution from "In the Penal Colony"; in fact, the "designer" part of this machine is a computer of sorts. At the time of the film's production, computer systems provide a useful material image analogue for the system of law with all its touted efficiency and with all its failures. Of course, the computer in this film can provide no answer. Evidently, Welles found in computers a fine image of systematization equivalent to the mechanicality of the system of the law with its associated gender and culture deceptions.

Welles' adaptation of Kafka's novel demonstrates how important discursive qualities are in the adaptation and production of expressionism. Although Welles probably did not read well the satirical elements in Kafka, it is likely that his own appreciation for satire helped him to recognize

Kafka's writing as an appropriate place for satirical gesture.[4.12] The hundreds of candles that Welles uses in his set for Hassler's apartment is one instance of satirical exaggeration which finds an echo in Bertolucci's film where an office is littered with hundreds of walnuts. There are enough "echos" in Bertolucci's film to suggest that he studied Welles' film with some care.[4.13]

The so-called decadence of subjectivist textuality is ameliorated by expressionistic concern with textual discourse, and it is through discourse that apparently isolated expressionistic works take on the connections of a broad cultural movement. Welles' film of Kafka's novel works well, but the "cinematic" motifs of Kafka also occur in Bertolucci's film and in Cocteau's as well. Cocteau's Orpheus (1950) may have provided an additional model for Welles and Bertolucci. In an earlier discussion elsewhere are detailed the discursive image correlates which connect Kafka's novel to Moravia's The Conformist; Burroughs' "cinematic" prose develops motifs from Kafka, and part of Nova Express excerpts a passage from The Trial, just as the passage quoted above seems appropriate to Kafka's novel; Bataille's novel Blue of Noon features an animated sculpture of Minerva which pursues the protagonist in a dream ("'The Drum': Postmodernity and Textuality'" 74-77). These images serve as discursive connections which array Kafka's The Trial with Moravia's novel The Conformist, with Burroughs'

novel Nova Express, and with Bataille's novel Blue of Noon; to this array of novels are added the films by Welles, Bertolucci, and Cocteau. Kafka's novel is no longer isolated or unique, for a significant group of works are now connected to his novel, and this textual array is reflective of a social array which subjects the authoritative genre of the historical novel to satirical treatments which expose the faulty foundations of historical writing.

Some Conclusions on Kafka

First, the uses of the definite material image provide textual effects in Kafka that produce the apparent affects implied by misinterpretations. Kafka's writing is affective because of his contextualization within dream spatial-temporality, an oneiric representational field, and within this context effect tends to coincide with affect.

Second, the uses of the indefinite material image in Kafka tend to reinforce his definite effects/affects. This discourse of the indefinite image draws readers more deeply into the complexity of the psychic unconscious. Kafka's castle is equivalent to Poe's school in "William Wilson," and Poe's theme coincides with that of The Trial, in the sense of innocence and guilt, but Poe's school is significant as an image of the unconscious, the indefinite quality of the conscious sensorium.[4.14] This indefinite

quality heralds the movement away from an imitative mimesis toward an oneiric representational field.

Too much emphasis on the interminability of the legal process and of the castle leads to an emphasis on infinite structures and into the trap of the critical sublime. Of what use is the infinite as opposed to "many," when Kafka simply refuses to say "how many"? This emphasis on infinite structures is a problem for Deleuze and Guattari's study of Kafka, and it is indicative of their attempt to portray Kafka as a naturalistic writer in order to justify Kafka's political discourse. This seems unnecessary in light of the current discussion. Kafka's texts provide political discourse in their subliminal presentations which require the recognition of dream structures.

Kafka's precise development of unconscious structures opposes the refuge of the sublime while carrying the reader into this unfamiliar psychic territory. The "womb" is filled with intruders and instructions; its terrain has become the body, but it looks like a city street. No wonder readers find this unsettling, but they cannot escape this vertigo by designating Kafka's prose as an "experiment," for these pieces are very carefully constructed and as "finished" as necessary. Few writers so well exemplify Wilde's dictum "when critics disagree the artist is in accord with himself" ("Preface" to The Picture of Dorian Gray 17).

Third, Kafka's stylistic integrity invites a response appropriate to the vastness and complexity of his vision. When the reader has been reduced to helplessness by Kafka's levering of the world into one's head, forcing the recognition of a personal responsibilty for all that this world contains, one is left without recourse but to play Kafka's game along with him. One learns to appreciate the paradoxical nuances of K's personalities, indeed, to empathize with them. One learns to see the humor of it, to laugh along with Kafka; even if such laughter is uncertain, there is a healing quality in coming to self-knowledge. If discoveries are ugly, then all the more need to laugh in accepting them. If death is a teacher, Kafka invites the reader to a long lesson of history, and laughter allays the sense of futility, for Kafka transforms futility into a fertile field, full of insight, an imaginative crucible promising rareties. Kafka reveals the technology of writing as a paradoxical revelation and concealment, a game with uncertain but instructive goals.

Finally, the recognition of Kafka's comic gesture (perhaps tragicomic or seriocomic) has significant literary consequences. Kafka redefines social interdependence as a common participation in dreamplay. The reader either must renounce Kafka's diabolisms or learn to heal the traumas through laughter. Acceptance is not necessarily condemnation; like K in <u>The Trial</u>, one can die laughing, as

Welles portrays in his film, but one can also try to go on (Beckett's famous saying from The Unnamable) to some other possibility. In fact, such potentials can only open up when one has shed one's delusions. Kafka records the grim duel between life and death to discover life in the penal colony and beauty in inharmonius music.

This gesture typifies the postmodern genres of satirical darkness, including surrealism, tragicomedy, black humor, and black fantasy. Black humor and black fantasy here refer to the expressionistic approach to a temporality of dreams with mundane images designating black humor and unreal images indicating black fantasy, as black is the common color of outer and inner space. Kafka's involvement with an unreal temporality sets his work somewhat apart from surrealism and tragicomedy which rely on real temporality for their effects, although it is easy to locate surreal and tragicomic effects in Kafka. One recent writer who also develops a dream temporality is Monique Wittig, and the oneiric utopia of Les Guerrilleres recalls Kafka's intensity of affect, although she develops a political alternative which Kafka withholds. It is the pervasiveness of dream time in Kafka which conveys the cinematic quality of his writing, for dreams, like film, are unrestricted in their manipulation of images. A final word, although Kafka's novels can be deeply instructive of Kafka's narrative strategies, Kafka's authorized works present a largely

sufficient oeuvre for readers to follow his methods. His reactive, subliminal texts show writing as the dream of language.

CHAPTER FIVE

SAMUEL BECKETT

Samuel Beckett remains one of the most consummate and complex stylists the literary world has yet witnessed. Like Borges, and like their common precursor Kafka, Beckett's writing reveals and problematizes the very structures by which meaning is created. As a producer of the text of images, he shows how images, like words, lack any inherent closure by insisting on the abyss between systems of signification and the world of reference. For Beckett, all perception devolves to representation without ultimate reference; nevertheless, his representational play is full of conceptual innovation, using language to create representational structures where none existed before. The most major obstacle to reading Beckett is the reader's own linear assumptions about language and reference. Beckett's writing deforms mimetic conventions, but at the same time it creates new conceptual representations. In this sense, Beckett's writing is theoretical, not like this study which seeks to name the complex movements of literary posturing, but in the sense of constant, metatextual comment.

Although one may find fictional structures in Beckett; ultimately, his writing is not fiction. Beckett's use of literal word and cinematic image exposes the distinction between truth and fiction as the thinnest of arbitrary

ruses. Corngold's comments on the "negative and embattled form" of Kafka's writing (see the previous chapter) apply also to Beckett, but with an even more vengeful intensity. Beckett's omnipresent negativity still promises conceptual rewards for persistent readers, and a prominent example can be found in the echoes of Beckettian discourse in Ursula Le Guin's superlative story "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" (1975). Beckett's negative style has its precursors as well, but none have developed negativity to such powerful conclusions as has Beckett.

H.P. Lovecraft wrote a horror story called "The Unnamable," an expressionistic tale in which he discusses his own "negative" style as a response to the monstrous hypocrisies of Puritanism. Lovecraft's trademark "negativity" appears to be developed from an aspect of Poe's style in which vague words harness the reader's imagination to a particular effect (for example, "thus" in Poe's "William Wilson"), but Lovecraft's defense of his own use of negative style in this story anticipates elements of Samuel Beckett's novel of the same title.[5.1] For Lovecraft, "the Puritan Age in Massachusetts" of which "so little is known" is defined in negative terms:

> there was no beauty: no freedom -- we can see that from the architectural and household remains, and the poisonous sermons of the cramped divines. And inside . . . lurked gibbering hideousness, perversion, and diabolism. Here, truly was the apotheosis of the unnamable (102).

Beckett's narrative "voice" may be better characterized as an "attitude" than as a "character," an attitude which disputes any version or foundation of truth, including its own -- an attitude against representation itself. Lovecraft's narrator questions:

> what coherent representation could express or portray so gibbous and infamous a nebulosity as the specter of a malign, chaotic perversion, itself a morbid blasphemy against nature? Molded by the dead brain of a hybrid nightmare, would not such a vaporous terror constitute in all loathsome truth the exquisitely, the shriekingly unnamable? (104);

but Lovecraft's consideration of the attempt to represent a spirit projected from such emptiness, an attempt laced with satiric innuendo, runs parallel to Beckett's satiric debunking of Cartesian intellectualism. At least one critic notes similar terms:

> the Unnamable's "I, say I. Unbelieving" (3) signals a long futile search for the I. Outside of time, space and memory, are we not nothing? Descartes' final assurance comes through a God who is incapable of Deception . . . However, in the case of the Beckettian "naked I" trying to grasp itself and feeling nothing but the time-space ghost, the ghost of beginning and end, in its role of memory and words, the distance toward either the deceitful or the undeceiving God is equally far (Schulz 36).

Lovecraft's blend of horror and satire in his exhibition of the palpable "unnamable," this "spectre" of spiritual emptiness (one of his more indeterminate monstrous presences), anticipates Beckett's similar blend of styles in his horrific realm of the unnamable, a spectral voice stranded in an "afterlife" (Hutchings 100). Moreover, Frye

attributes Coleridge's metaphor of "nightmare life in death" to his overview of Beckett's work, indicating

> in The Unnamable we come as near to the core of the onion as it is possible to come . . . [to find] the tired, tireless, hypnotic voice, muttering like a disembodied spirit at a seance, or like our own subconscious if we acquire the trick of listening to it (33).

Frye compares this voice to "the brothel scene of Ulysses" ("Circe") in its indeterminacy (32). Like Lovecraft's monster, this unnamable voice partakes of an essentially indefinite quality, resisting attempts to concretize its representation.

Viewing a popular writer like Lovecraft as parallel to Beckett helps to ameliorate the experimental isolation often attributed to Beckett, and it helps to show Beckett's connection to "lower," popular styles often cited as constituents in his writing ("burlesque" is one widely employed term). Hutchings has explored this angle before with respect to The Unnamable.[5.2] Some have recognized (as does this study) common factors of widely divergent, though accomplished, literary styles. Franco Fanizza cites Boisdeffre on Beckett:

> here many ages of accusation against the world reach an end: man's humiliation, which, from Rousseau to Kafka, paralyzes so many writers, culminates here in a world of abjection and ignominy (79).[5.3]

Fanizza himself sums up Beckett criticism:

> all attempts to "find" a meaning in his work have failed, because his work is an accusation against culture rather than a cultural datum; rather than

> taking pleasure in expression, it puts the problem of expression at the crossroads of words and silence (72-73).

Deleuze and Guattari compare Kafka with Beckett and Joyce in their habitation "within the genial conditions of a minor literature," although they mark off Kafka's accomplishments from Beckett's and Joyce's, which are also viewed as markedly different (19). Schulz explains that although critical accord finds in Beckett and Proust a common "concern with memory," Beckett's attitude toward memory is oppostional to Proust's, suggesting in Beckett "caricatures . . . of 'involuntary memory'" (42, 34). Such comparisons seek to specify the particular accomplishments of these writers, but they also view these writers within a common field, a field generally demarcated from traditional naturalism. This important recognition balances views of literary dialogue in which particular writers are examined as isolated challengers to a hegemonic canonicity by finding the aggregations of "experimental" writers to be indicative of alternative movements within the literature and culture.[5.4]

Beckett's method in The Unnamable comes closest to Kafka's indeterminate temporality in perhaps the "blackest" fantasy of them all. If Beckett does eclipse Kafka's dream universe through his "voice's" most indefinite of discourses, Fanizza's recognition of the "crossroads of word and silence" in Beckett calls attention not only to words

and the spaces between them (where something like reality lurks) but also to the framed images surrounded by blackness which are the film medium's equivalent to words and white space. The Unnamable provides a catalogue of images, many indefinite ones, images that surge out of the blackness of this "voice's" habitation, images which inhabit the verge of recognition before returning to this "astral" darkness. These images nonetheless contain the essential elements of cinematic style, a style in which concrete images which belie their own indefinite qualities are brought together from isolation, stitched into an apparent whole by the regularities of a black emulsion, pulses of visual "silence" which frame snippets of a dream.

In The Unnamable the curtailment of freedom provides a justification for unrelenting resistance and subsequent stalemate, a vocal stasis. Perhaps paradoxically, this attitude of resistance provides a subversive method against controlling discourses ("an accusation against culture"), but in the direct presentation of this attitude Beckett provides what was hard won in the study of Kafka. This resistance is also found in the Cocteau film where death's agents revolt against the "system" of death [Orpheus 1950], and Grove's copyright of 1958 for The Unnamable suggests Cocteau as another precursor to this stylistic strategy. As in Kafka, the "voice" considers all this indetermination as a possible dream, creating a dream text:

> perhaps it's a dream, all a dream, that would surprise me, I'll wake, in the silence, and never sleep again, it will be I, or dream, dream again, dream of a silence, a dream silence, full of murmurs, I don't know, that's all words, never wake, all words, there's nothing else (414).

Here Beckett clearly develops Kafka's "nightmare" from the inference of dream in Kafka to an ultimate and explicit conflation of dream and text with the satirical, reversed rhetoric of "surprise," reminiscent of Kafka's "hope." As Frye compared this piece to "Circe," it should also be recognized how this passage, coming at the end of this text, echoes Molly's independent attitude in "Penelope" with "sleep" and "silence" reproducing the sibilant effect of Joyce's "yes." Also, this concern with dream mimics Propero's famous epilogue in Shakespeare's The Tempest.

This apparently simple, yet highly indeterminate prose passage, nevertheless contains the determinate, allusive images of texts from Shakepeare to Kafka to Joyce. Densely allusive while maintaining an almost monosyllabic simplicity, Beckett suggests how much significance rests within the white space between words and within the black space between images. Beckett makes equivalent the signifying power of words and images with their limitations marked off in white or black space. Through his use of negativity, his language is full of indefinite constructions; these incomplete images approximate blank space in their resistance to interpretation, yet their very

incompletion is formed from definite images, often allusive and highly suggestive.

Beckett and the Definite Material Image

Beckett is intensely involved with "contact"; his work covers a wide range of genres and media: poetry, novels, stories, theatre, film, radio, and he adapts his images to these different forms. Beckett's writing is often allusive, although such allusions are more often picked out by scholars than are immediately apparent in his texts. This effect has been commented on (see below), and it likely derives from Beckett's emphatic prose and from his constant challenges to his reader, so there is a distraction away from allusion as a primary concern. Beckett does not use allusion as a device to enhance the authority of his style, as do Milton and Eliot, but neither does he write in a vacuum, and close attention reveals his relations to previous expressions. The gods are gone, yet their memory is fresh, and he creates archetypes out of minimal and indefinite psychic structures. Also, Beckett focuses on social relationships in an absurdist manner, often working in real-time genres, in terms of this study, as a black humorist.

Exploring Beckett's use of the definite material image exemplifies the paradoxical qualities of this concept, a

concept helpful to appreciate his highly paradoxical writing. Certainly, this image functions in Film in which the formal qualities of this project demonstrate Beckett's understanding of fundamental issues in cinema, issues that also contribute to an understanding of Beckett's prose (see below). Other cases of specific, highly developed images turn out to be not what they seem, as in logical permutations in Watt and narrative unreliability in Murphy.[5.5] There are also Beckett's allusions to the Bible, myths, philosophers, and other writers, particularly Joyce, Eliot and Proust, and the definite qualities of these allusions is somewhat undermined by the way in which they subtly inhabit the text, often beneath the surface. The informal monologue of the passage from The Unnamable (above) tends to mask its allusions through chat: the reader may get used to the flow of words without recognizing how they engage in intertextual comment.

Often, what is definite in Beckett's images is also minimal. Beckett's use of the minimal calls attention to his use of negative writing, for in the minimal not enough comes through to provide naturalistic fullness. The minimal is related to the negative through a kind of residue of description. In the minimal this residue is presented positively; paradoxically, a positive lack. In negative style, a residue remains after the "discount" of negation is taken into account. In Watt when one discounts the false or

redundant "logical permutations," one is left with a situation characterizable by such permutations, just as narrative unreliability reduces to a skeletal credibility. The minimal and the negative are inversely related in that less writing is required to present the minimal, while more writing is required to present the negative, but this quantification of words, of fewer for minimal and more for negative, in each case reduces to a verbal residue, a definite but limited image, which invites imaginative participation and much interpretation.

Beckett's writing tells its audience about writing, particularly about the audience's desire to find meaning in writing, an audience historically steeped in naturalistic writing.[5.6] Beckett's curtailed definite images confront the audience's desire for fullness and closure, and the audience attempts to provide such closure on its own by participating in the creation of meaning. Moreover, the audience recognizes this need to participate, hopefully, realizing how writing stimulates the desire for meaning by, paradoxically, not providing meaning itself. This problem is often glossed over by the film image, a form of definite image which replicates the real, overpowering its own lack of closure with a plentitude of natural detail, just as complex descriptive passages in naturalistic writing use detail to cover what is inevitably missed. Beckett's writing provides a plenitude of discourse, of dialogue with

its audience, by showing the limitations of writing and by provoking the audience with both minimally definite and indefinite, indeterminate images.

Part of the definite quality of Beckett's prose involves its structure, and strong critical readings note the importance of structure to interpretation. Beckett's literal, expressionistic style often cannot be taken too literally, just as his "reliable" narrative style sometimes proves to be unreliable. The voice of The Unnamable has an "aim . . . to reach a final silence through its own excess of speaking" that is realized in this text by the final words "I'll go on" (Kennedy 139, Three Novels 414). There is a definite allusion to the final affirmation of Molly's "Yes," the last word in Joyce's Ulysses (see the quoted passage above), but how much more paradoxically is this affirmation situated in Beckett's text than it is in Joyce's! Does this voice finally attain its "aim" at the moment of its final affirmation or should readers merely agree that this point, of beginning again, is appropriate for Beckett to end this novel? One may take the ending of Malone Dies as evidence to the "silence achieved" version: "never anything/ there/ any more" because this expressionistic ending is clearly forcing the end to the tale, implying the end of Malone (Three Novels 288). If the voice of The Unnamable were to mirror Joyce's Molly, who may be falling into sleep or unconsciousness through orgasm with

her final, affirmative syllable, this voice would have achieved its own silence. In fact, this voice's quest for silence itself suggests how one may "read" Molly's ending as a falling into sleep or silence through orgasm, with Beckett echoing Joyce.

As for the other version, it is a manifest fact of all texts that they do come to an end, and if this end does not necessarily provide "closure" it certainly does mark the end of its writing. Because the voice of Beckett's novel continually says it will stop and continually goes on, one recognizes a structure of return and continuation, a structure which the text may not have the power to end, a structure persistent beyond its textual finish insofar as it suggests a quality of existence or "consciousness." This structure persists in the interpretation or commentary on Beckett's text; for example Schulz gives "an 'eternity of reflection'," noting that for this voice "true rest therefore remains unattainable" (106, 107). Schulz places "eternity" in quotes in his careful analysis to mark the finite nature of the text which opposes its seemingly infinite structure. This repetitive structure invokes a narrative "present tense," for Schulz an "'instant without bounds'," for Kawin: "it is always present -- the time of consciousness" (106, Kawin 141).[5.7] It is this "presence" which may persist beyond the text since it may be this text's referent or context, and, paradoxically, the final

"I'll go on" remains a literal continuance even though this text has ended.

So this allusive, definite image of this final utterance "I'll go on" is also an indefinite image composed of ambivalent alternatives. Either this utterance is paradoxically stopped by this voice's realization of the achievement of silence at last, or this continuing structure paradoxically persists beyond its text since its continual repetition within this text suggests the context of a conscious continuance. The definite allusion to "Penelope" implies alternate versions either of an echo or an intensified self-referentiality or both as Beckett's possible attitudes towards Joyce's initial device of final affirmation in Ulysses; it is fair to say that Beckett presents a progressed form of this affirmation.

The only resolution of the two "voices" comes through reference to context. The first version voice finally stops because it believes it can and because it believes that it could stop unexpectedly, in mid-affirmation as it were. Its self-referentiality becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy indicating a contextual existence of a true silence as this text's referent, and, indeed, this text comes to an end in silence (as all do). The second version voice persists only in its referentiality since this text comes to an end, and persistence beyond the text is possible only if its continuance is truly an existent context, that is, if

consciousness always continues as "presence." At this point these two versions diverge with one claiming silence and the other claiming continuance. However, when the assertion of silence in the first version, which has a strong claim, is added to the assertion of continuance in the second version, the definite structure of this text, then the referential aggregate of continuance and silence, however paradoxical, constitutes the context of this novel. This is to say that this novel suggests that consciousness is continuance which may cease, but this cessation is specified as silence, a silence which may or may not be death. At this referential level, the divergence of these two versions can be reconciled, but only by a paradoxical formulation; its "truth" expresses the real as a paradox of continuing and of ending, where each term of this paradox denies the other. What astonishes here is that this paradox does not allow death its traditionally final end to consciousness, for the realm of silence may be outside of death altogether. Readers who feel that Beckett portrays an "afterlife" implicitly assert Beckett's "voice" to be already dead, suggesting death itself does not necessarily end consciousness.

This definite material image, of textual structure as reflected in the final phrase, therefore, infers an ambivalent indefinite material image or the definite image of a paradoxical dialectic of consciousness between

continuance and silence. In either case, an indefinite context is referenced by this image which contains a definite quality of indefinite reference. The Unnamable is crucial to an understanding of Beckett's writing. This novel problematizes writing since the definite dissolves into an indeterminate indefinite, and this is the definite character of writing which fears a discontinuity between language and life, and, so, produces an illusion, ultimately transparent, to deny such a discontinuity. This novel is a fecund source of indefinite images, but it is sustained by a definite though negative and minimal structure.

This interpretation of this novel whose subject is writing indicates how the definite is isolated by its identification of the indeterminate. Words and images can only refer to a context which is more indefinite than the words or images portray. The art of cinema creates statements by combining images into increasing, definite aggregates which can only suggest the complexity of their contexts, but which provide an illusive profusion of detail. The Unnamable expresses the problem of meaning in cinema as a problem already inherent in writing. Expressionistic writing may support a discourse, however speculative, if it does not pretend to didactic description. Schulz says that Beckett uses "a language that is ultrasensitive to its contradictions," and that his novels "answer Hegel's description of the metaphysical background of romantic (i.e.

modern) art and of its plight," but although this may not achieve "Hegel's . . . final art of the mind, of speculative thinking" it certainly provokes speculation on the metaphysics of subjectivity, just as it provokes Schulz's conclusions (95, 96). For expressionistic writing, form is not derived from content so much as it is itself emphasized throughout content. Beckett's definite content references an indefinite context, producing a representation of the limits of language itself. This discussion of the definite image now considers Beckett's image assemblage in Film.

Film

Beckett's half-hour film illustrates the correlation of cinematic representation to his writing, for the entire venture is based on a paradoxical principle, one which challenges the acquisition of meaning through writing and through cinematic representation. Film is a particularly abstract, formal production concerned with the "inescapability of self-perception" (Film 11). In this sense it fulfills one of Benjamin's formal qualities of film in which "the audience takes the position of the camera; its approach is that of testing" ("Work of Art" 228-29). Beckett uses the camera "as a relentless, omnipresent perceiver" (Gontarski 134). He tests the idealistic axiom "esse est percipi" (to be is to be perceived) to which "no

truth value attaches" (Film 11). Nonetheless, the literality of this axiom masks a problematic confusion of perception and representation and invokes the Cartesian problem of self-perception, a problem refuted by Beckett throughout his novels.[5.8] Beckett uses film to explore these problems, but in this exploration the literality of the film image is a trap which uses the definite quality of its representation more to undercut the definite quality of perception than to assert self-perception, although Gontarski reads this otherwise: "the lack of self-perception is merely an illusion" (134).

Again, the definite image of cinematic representation lacks closure but encloses illusion. Anne Friedberg in her current exploration of "cinema and the postmodern condition" considers Benjamin's "'unconscious optics'" which produce "'entirely new formations of the subject'" as yielding a "postmodern" condition where a "cinematic apparatus provides a desired psychosis in its mechanically reproducible construction of another place and time" (419, 427).[5.9] Her analysis follows from Jean-Louis Baudry's description of film's illusory power based on

> 'this wish [for "the illusion of a present as well as of a different, absent time"] which prepares the long history of cinema: the wish to construct a simulation machine capable of offering the subject perceptions which are really representations mistaken for perceptions' (427).

This wish correlates to that of Beckett's subject in Film who seeks to escape from self-perception, who can only avoid

anxiety while the camera (the pursuing subject and audience) remains "within this 'angle of immunity,' "not exceeding forty-five degrees" (11). The culmination of Beckett's plot involves the ultimate violation of this angle, and subject E (eye and camera) faces subject O (the "escapee") in mutual recognition. E and O are identical.

This mutual recognition is reminiscent of the final recognition of identity in Poe's story "William Wilson," (although Beckett does not describe a murder); instead, E fixes O with a stare of "acute intentness" while O covers his eyes to deny this stare. O's gesture is a self-deceptive one, his last resort to illusion, but the audience which once shared the perspective of E is now confronted by E's stare, so the violation of the "angle of immunity" becomes twofold: both O and the audience are "violated." Thus, O's obvious self-deception reflects the audience's open-eyed self-deception, because of the long-standing identity of E's point of view with that of the audience's. Beckett uses this device to force the audience's recognition of its own escape into illusion.

The audience's illusion, however, remains paradoxical in that its own open-eyed viewing is both a recapitualation of O's desire to escape E's stare and a recognition of this representation of O's desire to escape into illusion. If "to be is to perceived," does the audience's recognition of this representation of retreat from self-recognition of the

subject O imply the perception by the audience of its own retreat from self-recognition via the illusion of the film subject? The problem here is the insufficiency of this distinction between "perception" and "representation," less of a problem for Berkeley than for Beckett (Gontarski 130). This distinction is glossed over by Baudry for whom a filmic representation is obviously different from a sensual perception of reality. Beckett forces this issue. How different is a perception from a representation?

In the sense that E and O are one "split" subject, with one "perceiving" and the other "perceived" only so long as this subject continues to escape from the "perception" of his "perceiver," the intense "instant" of mutual recognition is framed in cinema as a representation, a representation into which the audience is implicated. The audience is pressed by Beckett into perceiving a representation of its own escape into illusion, but this perception is itself illusory, for "we and the camera perceive him [O] even when he is 'safely' within what Beckett calls the 'angle of immunity'" (Gontarski 134). Beckett uses film to transform "inescapable" self-perception into representation, and representation as such calls into question the validity of perception itself in that it problematizes the description of any perception that is not already mere representation.

Descartes' cogito ergo sum also loses its cogent power in this context since "cogito" is reduced to mere words, not

thought but representations of thought. Beckett's works, particularly The Unnamable, drive toward the realization that perception is only valid if nothing is perceived; the only valid thought is silence, all else is representation. The cost of maintaining a difference between perception and representation is that for perception both perceiver and perception only come into being as nothing and silence, as non-being. Otherwise only a representation is apprehended, and, further, only a representation apprehends a representation. For Beckett's idealism, if one can call this destruction of ideal principles idealism, perceiver and perception are indistinguishable within nothing and silence. Pragmatically, if such silence is not achieved, then all reception is representation, reception of consciousness as well as art, with the receiver remaining a representation. Metaphysics is undone insofar as each succeeding level represents the preceding level, a continuing recursiveness, and idealism is supported by nothing, validated only by silence, since non-existence only can provide the basis for a difference to justify the perceptual distinctions of idealism. The perception of the unrepresentable is no perception at all. Here not to be is to be perceived, and within such a context the concept of perception itself unravels into non-existence as do all representations.

The definite image in Beckett's film reveals the limits of this image as representation at the same time that it

implicates everyone within this constriction of representation. The complexities of this argument are formidable, but they were all worked out by Beckett through the course of his novels which preceded Film.

Beckett effectively reformulates Berkeley's principle into something like "to be is to be represented" with reception of representation focused into the mirror-image or "doppelganger"; as with Poe, the horror of the double derives from a lack of precedence since neither double, ultimately, can establish authority by being original. "Self-perception" is self-representation with the subject fundamentally split, turning on this symmetry of self-representation/self-reception. For Beckett the subject lacks authority, and this lack extends Benjamin's axiom of the lack of aura in art to the lack of aura in the subject. This extension is rigorous, if unsettling, since art is considered a displaced subject as a reflection of subject or as subjectivity displaced into an object or product.

Gontarski finds some formidable problems with Film: "Beckett seems, at almost every stage of the creative process, to have been engaged in a battle with his medium" (135). Gontarski's essay details the history and outcome of Beckett's project very closely, but his criticisms appear to follow from taking Beckett too literally; for example, he sees the illusion of a lack of self-perception as problematic when it may be the virtue of this project that

the recognition of continual self-perception leads to the comic, stylized games of escape and avoidance. Beckett's presentation of these rituals of self-representation are a dynamic both of his subjects and of his audience: O always "knows" E is pursuing, watching, just as the audience is implicated in these evasive games. The audience's recognition of this implication is crucial, and this is established through the use of the camera; if it does go "unrecognized" the audience is, paradoxically, even more implicated in its sharing of the illusory, self-evasive strategies of the subject O. It may very well be that film technology can improve in its presentation of Beckett's project, but this project works out aspects of cinematic spectation from a highly developed representation of writing itself.

In Understanding Media McLuhan explains the different impacts of film on illiterate cultures who "have to learn to 'see' photographs or film just as much as we have to learn our letters" and literate cultures who are "accustomed to following printed imagery line by line without questioning the logic of lineality, [and who] will accept film sequence without protest" (250). Beckett continually challenges linear logic through his ongoing destructions of his own image constructions, thereby exposing fundamental limits of writing and language. McLuhan points out that Bergson "created a sensation by associating the thought process with

the form of the movie [1911, Creative Evolution]" and remarks:

> just at the extreme point of mechanization represented by the factory, the film, and the press, men seemed by the stream of consciousness, or interior film to obtain release into a world of spontaneity, of dreams, and of unique personal experience (258).

This comparison of film with stream of consciousness writing, of montage with the flow of images, reaches a kind of culmination in Beckett's expressionistic stream of consciousness style. Unlike his predecessors Kafka and Joyce, who construct consciousnesses out of writing, Beckett constructs a consciousness of writing which both constructs consciousness and critiques its constructions more or less simultaneously. This progressed stylistic form reflects the inherent chaos of language, exposing its orderly assumptions as illusory, at the same time that it brings its audience closer to a recognition of language's imaginative source, a desire or dream of order.

The problem of writing naturalistically becomes exposed as untenable by Kafka, Cocteau, and Beckett, but each offers a progressed form of representation of the "unreal" which more than compensates for this loss by freeing language from its natural referentiality and placing it within a representational context. Dream representation progresses to astral representation. In Kafka, one glimpses this astral world from within the dream; Cocteau structures a universe where the natural and astral worlds meet in the

mirror. Beckett in Film shows how this mirror is an image of representation; he uses language and writing to develop worlds within this mirror of representation. This process develops perspectives from which philosophical and religious ideas can be intently examined: this astral world is the habitat of the soul, and this soul is "perfectly" manifest in silence, but it also inhabits language and writes through paradoxes of representation. This progression of representation has a generic impact in that it shows how expressionistic forms build upon other expressionistic forms. The delineation in Kafka of black fantasy progresses to a more expressionistic black fantasy in Beckett's astral novels.

If there seems to be a severe nihilism implicit in Film, it is somewhat balanced by its own wealth of complexity of representation. Beckett extends the representational capacity of language even while he severely draws attention to its limits. Film is exemplary in its demonstrable connections between language and cinema, and if the audience is somehow convicted of self-delusion, it is also invited into new territories of representation. Cocteau's Orpheus provides an expressionistic image of such a territory when Orpheus and death's agents travel through mirrors into death's realm, a realm of ruins and of Kafkaesque functionaries. These sinister functionaries derive from Kafka's The Trial as dream projections of the

shadow archetype, reflections of the sense of shame which is the theme of this novel. K's resistance, maintained until his death, in this dreamworld is echoed by the resistance of the death of Orpheus and her assistant in Cocteau's film where the dreamworld of Kafka has been transformed into the astral world of death's realm, a progressed territorial representation where death itself is resisted and witnessed by Orpheus' return to life from death, a literal resurrection achieved by the murder of Orpheus within death's realm. This representational progression continues in Beckett who clearly situates at least two novels, The Unnamable and How It Is, completely within an astral realm, variously referred to as "hell" or "afterlife" in critics' attempts to describe these "unnatural" settings. Cocteau's representational movement between the realms of life and death are recapitulated variously in Beckett's novels Watt and Malone Dies.

Beckett's Film is not only a minimal nominative of "a film," but it is also a conceptual explication of cinematic form itself; in this sense it is all film. Beckett achieves this through his writing which broadly draws his lines of representation, but too much attention to the details of representation enmesh the audience within the very illusion that the film invites its audience to recognize. Poe's "William Wilson" uses the device of the double, the personal archetype of the shadow, as a vehicle for the reader's

ultimate recognition of the collective shadow, Jung's trickster archetype, focused in the image of the devil (Crumb 40). In The Trial, K. as an individual battles this collective shadow focused in the image of the law, and the reader may recognize how this spiritual problem cannot be explained away by figuration, how one's very thoughts are shadows. Cocteau's Orpheus portrays the doubled constituents of human personality as inhabiting primarily either the naturalistic world or the astral realm of death, but the poet, Orpheus, comes to live in both, and the audience may recognize the complexity of this representational universe, a descriptive space capable of rendering concepts beyond mundane naturalism. Beckett's Film is a conceptual door to this representational universe; like Cocteau's mirror it invites its audience to recognize their own limited illusions of linear representation and provokes the discovery of more constructive conceptual illusions through this paradoxical insight into the double essence of all representation. Cinematic expression(ism) is a progressed form of writing where the imagination inhabits a sea of images, images which provoke through their futility the desire for silence, for the realm of non-existence where the soul abides in self-sufficiency. Writing uses language to create representation, and Beckett recreates numerous paths to the paradoxical realization of expressionism. This realization is that writing ultimately represents nothing

but itself and that language represents existence out of non-existence, from silence.

Literary Allusions

This paradoxical realization of expressionism, that writing only represents itself, may seem tautological, but just as this realization destabilizes the axioms of naturalistic representation, it also creates new questions which writing can explore. If the essence of soul is silence, does soul exist in an individual form or does it contain existence itself? Where is this astral world? In dreams? Is death a necessary quality of this astral life or a mere metaphor of soul? Is life possible beyond such a universal metaphor? Is this metaphor of death the fruit of the knowledge of that edenic tree? Beckett uses the definite image in his writing to provoke such questions, and his allusive richness reaches intertextually to other literary and philosophical formulations of these questions.

The use of the term "invitation" with respect to the audience of Film derives from Beckett's use of biblical allusion, such as the story of the two thieves in Waiting for Godot where one is saved and the other damned; this suggests the illusory quality of representation. The story of the thieves is part of the Crucifixion, and Kristin Morrison has worked out other references to the Crucifixion,

one from That Time (the "phrase 'the passers pausing to gape'") and another from Endgame (noting that "'Mother Pegg' . . . and [its] subsequent connection with crucifixion is faithfully repeated by most commentators"), but this widely recognized allusion in Endgame is not fully elaborated (91-94). Morrison works out the terms in this allusion to the parables in the New Testament "about the wise and foolish virgins" and "an allied parable, also about a marriage feast"; these terms include "oil, lamp, hell, darkness." Morrison explains how these parables "express in little the whole Christian message of salvation, here used for ironic contrast, to intensify the sense of hopelessness in Endgame" (94). An additional reference to the parable of the virgins is found in Waiting for Godot (95).

These allusions have an expressionistic value, particularly in Waiting for Godot and in Endgame. Both these plays contains allusions both to the Crucifixion and to the virgins. The parables of the virgins and the marriage feast are not prophetic, so these allusions themselves stand in ironic contrast to those allusions to the Crucifixion, which has come about from a lack of recognition of salvation (albeit one which was prophesied; Beckett here seems to echo Borges' discussion of Kafka in the previous chapter). This lack of recognition suggests an expressionistic indictment of representation itself, since salvation corresponds to meaning, and meaning represented by

word is faulty. In fact, such representation is so faulty that Beckett's use of these allusions tends to undermine the very texts of "Word" from which they are taken. Within this context, Beckett's allusions to the Crucifixion expressionistically pun on "fiction." Beckett's irony with respect to biblical allusion is thoroughgoing.

Schulz details a number of intensely ironic religious images and allusions from the novels, for example, Molloy's "'veritable calvary, with no limit to its stations and no hope of cruxifiction' (105)" (101). For Schulz, Beckett's narrators in the novels "have a double image of God, as they have of themselves, as dead and as cruelly alive" (102). One may take it that this "double" sense which inhabits biblical prose and more ironically inhabits Beckett's prose indicates how representation cannot generate meaning which is also not empty. Beckett's biblical allusions themselves have a transparent quality discussed by Morrison:

> the same felicity that characterizes Beckett's prose style generally also governs his use of many biblical allusions. They merge perfectly and unobtrusively with his larger purpose, present often only as subtle verbal echoes, whispered reinforcements of moods, themes, ironies already established (96-7).

One may note the similarity of these remarks to the discussion of literary allusions at the conclusion of The Unnamable (above); this suggests how Beckett's allusive method is generally quite subtle. Also, this study finds Beckett's "larger purpose" includes a demystification of

traditional sources, and his ironic use of expressionistic language indicates the problems of representation in the sources of his allusions at the same time that he uses allusions to emphasize these problems of representation.

Beckett's method of demystification differs somewhat from Kafka's method. Kafka displaces tradition through satirical emphasis: Poseidon is satirically juxtaposed to a typical bureaucracy; Titorelli's (Orpheus) homosexuality is emphasized, satirically suggesting the judge's appropriation of the feminine, and so on. Beckett's satire, on the other hand, attacks language and its representations themselves, so his method enforces the recognition of the limits of representation, and these limits are even more apparent in source texts for the allusions. Beckett's expressionistic satire is enormously funny not only because he satirizes his own language with all its failures but also because his language emphasizes the failures of tradition which has preceded him. Beckett's subtle incorporation of other texts makes those texts the butt of his jokes at the same time that his prose invites laughter at its own representational failure.

Mythic Allusions

Beckett's use of mythic allusions have become more extensively developed by scholars with conclusions that

recognize the demystification of his allusive method.[5.10] Burkman's introduction to her essay collection indicates that all "the authors share a sense of the complex ways in which myth and ritual operate in the plays as well as a sense of their interconnectedness" (14). She concludes that these essays suggest "that Beckett's power as a playwright derives in large measure from a kind of mythic vision that informs his drama. Doll finds in Beckett a "mythopoetics, a poetics of myth" wherein "Beckett's work lends itself wonderfully to a mythopoetic method precisely because it breaks form . . . [allowing] us to see patterns . . . afresh" (5). She cites Rabinovitz, Gontarski, and Brienza who have characterized Beckett's style's "unstable structure" as a "repeating helix," a "musical structure," and a "mandala." Doll identifies several types of consciousness in Beckett focused through three myths: Narcissus and Echo, Cronus, and Demeter (6). Ultimately, for Doll Beckett's "great black pauses" mark a "radical proposal" and "mystery invades the moment" (7). Such a mystery functions as a demystification in that it reopens mythic space to reinvention by breaking down traditional mythic structures. This has generic consequences with respect to Beckett's extension of Kafka's strategy of oneiric representation wherein myths are deformed into demystification.

Beckett's work sometimes develops an astral representation where his "archetypal return takes away labels," and reinvented myth constitutes a powerful, less definite, archetypal representation (Doll 7). Much of Beckett's work represents an unreal temporality of a black fantastic form, more than Kafka's, an extension of the genre of black fantasy into a relatively more expressionistic form than Kafka's more definite, oneiric (Jungian) form of black fantasy. Within the black fantasy genre, unreal spatial temporality develops through oneiric representation, which opens vision to astral space, and through astral representation, which produces vision from mythic reinvention. Paradoxically, astral representation is even more indefinite since its habitation is a minimally defined spatial temporality, more than the nightmare of history which provokes vision in many of Kafka's works.

The idea of writing as Heideggerian techne, one of the fundamental recognitions in this study, is specifically developed by Phyllis Carey with respect to Beckett's play Happy Days:

> human techne stripped of centuries of distortion and exploitation finds its origins in the awe and terror expressed in ritual. To reawaken that awe and terror, Beckett's aesthetic ritual unmakes the metaphors that have become habitual or wishful ways of seeing (149).

Carey recognizes in several of Beckett's works the exploration of "the complex relationship between human and machine," finding that "Beckett suggests the potency of

aesthetic ritual as an agent of revelation" (144). Of course, along with revelation there is a corresponding concealment within Heidegger's idea of techne, and this paradoxical combination spurs a participatory interpretation, a reinvention, since Beckett may provide clues, but he does not also provide confirmation, and this lack of didacticism provokes the speculative and indefinite form of interpretation with respect to his works.

The idea of the machine includes definite overtones. Claudia Clausius indicates that "the mechanical ritual of life is the prerequisite to awakening" from aesthetic illusionism in which "the sense of recognition we enjoy tempts us into a false belief in our real familiarity with the world (142). Thus, naturalism becomes exposed as a mechanical illusionism. Clausius' recognition that Waiting for Godot provokes "defamiliarization" and "demythification" with respect to the real suggests another generic direction taken by Beckett in his work.

Black humor and tragicomedy (Beckett's own characterization of this play) derive their power from a certain emphasis upon the natural, but this emphasis does not allow for didactic conclusion; thus, these genres are frequently considered "absurd" representations. Martin Esslin suggests Waiting for Godot represents a reaction in which Beckett presented "his rejection of what he has called 'the grotesque fallacy of realistic art'" (29). Beckett

uses naturalism to attack "realism" as "a great master of language as an artistic medium"; he "attacks the cheap and facile complacency of those who believe that to name a problem is to solve it, that the world can be mastered by neat classification and formulations" (88). Nothing can be determined with certainty from Beckett's "devalued language" except for the certainty of his devaluation, and this nothingness opposes mimetic didacticism. Nonetheless, forms of realistic representation enforce Beckett's paradoxical dialectic of representation.

The "tragicomic" quality of Waiting for Godot may be described as a realistic temporality in which nothing obtains as an object lesson; this impulse is oppositional to science fiction or utopian representation in which some aspect of reality is emphasized through a realistic future temporality, representing an object lesson. In this play realistic imagery serves to emphasize an equivalence between present and future time in which nothing obtains or will obtain except, for the audience, the recognition of illusion. The sense of "absurdity" derives a lack of "positivity," but there are different forms of absurdity.

The relatively simple naturalism of the imagery in Waiting for Godot stands in generic contrast to the black humor form exemplified by Beckett's Watt where the imagery remains naturalistic, but it is developed within an unreal temporal structure. Watt's arrival at Mr. Knott's house as

a servant at the moment of the departure of a previous servant, anticipating the clockwork of Watt's own eventual departure, combines with the fantastic permutations of the furniture within Mr. Knott's room into the representation of an "impossible" sort of structure composed of natural events. Of course, there is no impossibility regarding representation; the impossibility emerges in the unlikelihood of this representation connecting to a real context, of representing natural events. The structure of Watt presents an unreal temporality which makes use of realistic images, but Waiting for Godot presents a real temporality with realistic images: these forms of the absurd are designated in the image-genre matrix as black humor and tragicomedy, respectively. These generic recognitions show how Beckett is able to develop his paradoxical program of representation into different representational permutations, different genres, with similar effects achieved in different forms of portrayal.

Philosophical Allusions

The definite forms of philosophical allusion in Beckett have received a good deal of study; Doll indicates that "Beckett's use of ideas such as rationalism, pessimism, or existentialism -- shaped according to their formalist, absurdist, or deconstructive molds -- has been well

documented" (1).[5.11] A connection to Heidegger has been discussed above, and Schulz's discussion of Beckett's connection to Déscartes and Hegel will receive more attention shortly.

One problem of philosophical allusion in Beckett derives generally from the difference between the definite appearance of philosophical propositions in Beckett (as in esse est percipi, above) and the interpretation of Beckett's language in terms of philosophical allusions. It is to Schulz's credit that he exercises great care with respect to the definition of philosophical ideas and their representation in Beckett's novels. For the purpose of discussing the definite image of philosophical allusion in Beckett, his poem "Whoroscope" will serve as an example of philosophical allusion to Descartes.

Beckett's prizewinning poem takes on the persona of Descartes himself and proceeds to satirize his philosophy.[5.12] Ellmann and O'Clair note "its implied rejection of Descartes," resulting from its "criticism of Cartesian philosophy" and its "obscurity" which "outdoes The Waste Land" (710). Nonetheless, Beckett's obscure method allays elitism through his satirical tone which continously emphasizes Descartes' material concerns, and this stands in contrast to wide apprehension of Descartes being an idealist philosopher: "In the name of Bacon will you chicken me up that egg./ Shall I swallow cave-phantoms?" (713). Here the

reference to Plato's shadows of the cave, an image of idealist perception, which bears a certain ancestry to Descarte's thought, is juxtaposed to images of food, including a double entendre on Bacon's name (bacon and eggs, a commonplace) and the use of the noun "chicken" as a verb "to stir" or "to prepare."[5.13] Zurbrugg recalls Beckett's warning that "'the danger is in the neatness of identifications'," and these expressionistic puns violate linguistic neatness as they prepare for the sixth line following this quote "Fallor, ergo sum," a pithy rejection of Descartes famous cogito with a derogatory emphasis on the preceeding "cave-shadows."[5.14] Beckett's repetitions concerning motion "That's not moving that's moving" and "Then I will rise and move moving" appear to refer to Descartes' physics where "the quantity that is conserved in his system is motion" (711, 714; Williams 352). Descartes' system yields erroneous results which Beckett appears to be emphasizing through this use of "motion doubletalk."

This dramatic monologue begins with Descartes inspecting eggs for his omelet, and his questions about the inside of each egg provide metaphorical instances for his universal inquiries; indeed, the egg itself has a history of symbolizing the universe. Beckett emphasizes this symbolism in his note: "'the shuttle of a ripening egg combs the warp of his days'" (711). The speculation "Two lashed ovaries with prostisciutto?" not only provides a double-language pun

but also proffers a surreal image connecting human and animal flesh. As Descartes sought to radically distinguish human life and animal life, professing that animals did not possess consciousness, this surreal image emblematizes the persona's sense of disgust and of arrogance by connecting women with animals, just as this poem's title connects women with geometry, astronomy, and astrology (Williams 354). This image also prepares the way for the images of material consumption discussed above. This surreal image itself provides a kind of microcosm of this poem in which the ideal and the material are blended into strange distortions, imaging the problem of epistemology itself wherein Descartes' development of certainty is certainly wrong by this poem's account.

Clearly, Beckett's definite allusion to Descartes' philosophy is hardly flattering, but it is probably undertaken to undermine the persistence of Cartesian notions in contemporary society. Beckett's poem moves in a parallel direction to Lovecraft's story (discussed earlier) in that Descartes' employment of the term "'natural light'" of reason is clearly connected to the light which informs puritanical interpretation (Williams 350). Thomas Reid noted that Berkeley (among others) remained within what "may still be called the Cartesian system" (rational and empirical orientations notwithstanding), and the discussion of the problems of representation (above) with respect to

Berkeley in Beckett's Film probably derive ultimately from Descartes (Williams 354). Thus, the aesthetic form of "natural light," naturalistic representation, is problematized by Beckett from "Whoroscope" (1930) to Film (1967) and beyond.

Those who characterize Beckett as a naturalist are missing a predominant thematic concern in his writing. A short poem of Beckett's reads: "what would I do without this world faceless incurious/ where to be lasts but an instant where every instant/ spills in the void the ignorance of having been" (715). This poetic question finds its answer in Beckett's novels where each one diminishes the world more than the previous one until in The Unnamable and in How It Is the natural world is virtually unrecognizable, largely yielding to an astral representation of soul.

The philosphical indirection of Beckett's definite and repeated attacks on Descartes still yields a positively definite quality in two ways. First, the attacks on Descartes call attention to his problematic metaphysics, and this in itself is a metaphysical objection insofar as it proposes to demonstrate the faults of such a metaphysics as Descartes' and insofar as it problematizes the very idea of metaphysics. For Schulz Beckett's "lamentations of a metaphysical hangover do not offer any tangible, positive suggestions" (95). This lack of metaphysical structure,

however, still indicates certain philosophical directions which ought to be recognized.

This second sense of philosophical definiteness includes at least two other methods: those of Wittgenstein and Hegel. There are likely others in that Marxist and deconstructionist readings of Beckett obtain, but this study will focus on these two philosphers. The appearance of "Whoroscope" follows Wittgenstein's Tractatus, and there is an implication that to deny Descartes may be to affirm Wittgenstein and some of his contemporaries whose work was "being aimed directly against what are still very powerful Cartesian conceptions" (Williams 354). Esslin focuses on Wittgenstein in his study:

> the relativization, devaluation, and criticism of language are also the prevailing trends in contemporary philosophy, as exemplified by Wittgenstein's conviction, in the last phase of his thinking, that the philosopher must endeavor to disentangle thought from the conventions and rules of grammar, which have been mistaken for the rules of logic (408).

This statement is instructive in light of Beckett's multitude of unreliable, logical permutations strewn throughout the narrative in Watt. Often, semantic variation poses as logical variation with the result that Watt's permutations are incorrect, if not invalid, for they seldom represent the appropriate number of permutations due to forms of semantic repetition which confuse every issue. Esslin goes on to cite Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations: "'a picture held us captive. And we could

not get outside it, for it lay in our language, and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably'" (408). Here is not only an analogue to Beckett's repeating narrative structures, but also an explanation for the need for indefinite image structures, structures pervasive in Beckett's writing. Beckett's mastery of language is most often exemplified in his ability to use language to withhold image while maintaining a complex discourse through language. This study identifies this as the indefinite image which is especially significant in its capability to diffuse all images, shattering the faith of the reader in mimetic imitation. The indefinite image will be discussed further shortly; here let it suffice that Beckett has developed written structures which answer Wittgenstein's objection.

The monograph by Schulz referred to several times above, entitled This Hell of Stories: A Hegelian Approach to the Novels of Samuel Beckett makes a strong case both for Beckett's rejection of Descartes and for a Hegelian reading of his novels. The author's belief in the corresponding dialectic quality of Hegel and Beckett is summed up in his preface:

> this study of Beckett's novels does not attempt to "revolutionize" Beckett criticism but systematically to loosen up the prevailing rigid conception of Beckett as "absurdist." The "system" of the approach has been borrowed from Hegel whose own "rigidity" hides a dynamism that is as frequently overlooked as is Beckett's (7).

In the discussion above, Beckett's participation in a number of generic forms goes some distance in making more precise the various expressionistic directions of Beckett's writing, directions which would undoubtedly be lumped together under the rubric of the absurd. Indeed, this generic matrix was developed in order to allay parallel problems associated with expressionism itself. Schulz's systematic matching of Beckett's passages with Hegel's develops a strong case for the consideration of Beckett as Hegelian dialectician, albeit from a specially interpretative view of Hegel:

> our rather radical reading of the Phenomenology in terms of the philosophical individual may disturb some of those whose understanding of the work is based entirely on an historical emphasis; its justification must come through our very approach to the Beckett heroes (61).

Particularly throughout Beckett's novels, his protagonists are nothing if not lonely or absolutely alone. Schulz characterizes the dialectic quality of Beckett's prose through the enumeration of fundamental paradoxes in Beckett's writing, including "the paradox of language and silence" and the "conscious paradox" (55, 40). Other paradoxical formulations include "the illusion of death" and "the grave of life" (64, 73). Regarding philosophical aesthetics, Schulz concludes that "we find Beckett and Hegel seemingly in agreement on the impossibility of a meaningful art to exist in our time" (94). Schulz has produced a strong case for the correlation of Beckett to his particular understanding of Hegel, a case most valuable for its

characterization of the dialectic quality in Beckett's novels.

In conclusion, as far as the definite quality of philosophical allusion in Beckett is concerned, this quality is most definite in its negative form. Beckett's rejection of Cartesian formulations is most accessible in Beckett's writing. Descartes' problematic equation of hearing and believing in the consciousness, for example, is answered by Beckett's protagonists' unshakable will to disbelieve, a more emphatic form of skepticism.[5.15] Descartes' idea of the soul's perception through images focused in the pineal gland ("a physical picture or representation was formed in the brain, and it was this that the soul was conscious of" [Williams 353]) seems particularly germane to questions of literary analysis in that literature continues to develop more intensive visual forms. Indeed, pineal perception became another of Lovecraft's horrific visions in "From Beyond" (1939):

> you have heard of the pineal gland? . . . That gland is the great sense organ of organs -- I have found out. It is like sight in the end, and transmits visual pictures to the brain. If you are normal, that is the way you ought to get most of it ... I mean get most of the evidence from beyond (62).

For Lovecraft this beyond is a source of indeterminate monstrosities, but what for Lovecraft is horrific, Beckett makes humorous. Lovecraft's indefinite, horrific visions are paralleled by Beckett's thoroughgoing indefinite

satires. Beckett's emphatic denial of visual closure, expressed through his artfully contrived non-visual representations is probably another way of discrediting Cartesian notions in which Wittgenstein may be a precursor. On the whole, the most definite philosophical allusion provided by Beckett is his negation of Cartesian thought. Again, Beckett's definite imagery is primarily negative.

Beckett's philosophical indirection leads to an interpretative emphasis by his readers on certain philosophers and their ideas. Strong cases can be made for Heidegger, Hegel, and Wittgenstein, as well as others including existentialists and deconstrutionists. Watt appears to provide an image of Wittgenstein's linguistic games (as noted above), but it is rare, such as in the cases of Descartes and of Berkeley, that Beckett definitely refers to particular philosophers, and that referral is negative. Nonetheless, the wealth of philosophical readings of Beckett attests to the definite philosophical quality in his writing. If Beckett is difficult to interpret, his interpreters often have recourse to philosophical methods, and this provides some evidence of the metatextual expressionism found in Beckett since interpretation of Beckett often leads to the examination of methods of interpretation itself.

In general, the definite image in Beckett's writing tends to delineate the limitations of definite signification

itself. The examination of various forms of definite imagery continually lead to more indefinite forms. Finally, the value of the indefinite becomes more appreciable. If Beckett is at all didactic, it is in his promotion of distrust of formulistic, naturalistic forms that this didacticism may be found. His use of images leads this reader to the realization that if discourse precedes image, and, if discourse is contained in images as representations, then discourse itself is only representative of itself. Apparently for Beckett, true representation is not representation, only silence is true.

Beckett and the Indefinite Material Image

It should already be clear that the heuristic of definite and indefinite material images provides a useful base for comparison of discursive strategies. Since images convey discourses, definite images tend to convey more definite discourses, while indefinite images represent particularly complex images. Indefinite images proclaim their own lack of closure, and this proclamation also leads to the recognition of the opacity of more definite images. Particularly with regard to Beckett, both forms ultimately lead to a primacy of speculative or of participatory discourse. Beckett's use of the definite material image almost invariably leads to negation or to indeterminacy.

Nevertheless, this indefinite quality in Beckett's writing yields an interpretive richness and provides the basis for insights into the problematic medium of writing as a technology for the presentation of meaning. Beckett expressionistically emphasizes this problematic through his widespread cultivation of indefinite image structures.

Beckett extends his expressionism into several generic directions, and this extension provides a basis for comparison of how discourse changes when spatial and temporal representation is varied in particular ways. Beckett's control of the writing medium through his indefinite strategies not only provides the basis for a variety of complex interpretations, but it also heightens appreciation of subtle differences in the process of representation. The value of expressionism is a heightened understanding of writing itself, an understanding which is not available when writers approach the problem of writing from the perspective that writing is largely a matter of conventions for naturalistic representation. The loss of conventional didacticism is more than compensated for by an illuminating originality which, as Zurbrugg indicates lies "in the differences between their pre-technological and part-technological verbalizations and dramatizations of complex "intersections" between different images of the self" (184). This formal originality retains an expressionistic focus on the Heideggerian techne of writing,

that writing both reveals and conceals. Beckett's use of the indefinite image leads interpretation into new territories through minimalism, indefinite perspectives or points of view, the possibility of actual future tenses or genres, and the connections between astral and realistic representations.

Minimalism

There has already been some discussion of minimalism; in its broad outline minimalism is both a definite structure (insofar as it is a definite representation) and an indefinite one (since this definite presentation is characterized by a lack, hence, minimal). Minimalism has always been present in Beckett's works, and it deserves some emphasis since it has developed as a trend more in Beckett's more recent productions. Doll concludes: "that Beckett's recent minimalist pieces are fiction expresses an insistence that fiction and reality -- or myth and reality -- can no longer afford to be separate entities" (71). This study has worked toward demonstrating how expressionism erodes the boundaries between "nature" and "fiction," and this is the reason that the image-genre matrix takes little account of the truth claims of images as opposed to their discernible characteristics for the purpose of generic classification.

Beckett's versatility with respect to the representation of image has already been shown, but his frequent use of the indefinite image indicates a deep concern with more abstract discourse, a discourse not easily represented by conventional or even symbolic images, not that Beckett's images are particularly conventional. Doll also notes that "Hillman speaks the same language as Beckett . . . Both insist that the splitting-off of soul from an objective cosmos to a subjective 'I' is an egoistic error of dualistic thinking, embraced by Cartesianism, scientism, and positivism" (72). There is irony in this agreement, for it reverses the charges against expressionism as subjective decadence and discovers a subjectivist complicity in the organization of natural "objective" knowledge and its representations, of naturalism. Expressionism exposes this epistemological hypocrisy and, more honestly, takes a subjective orientation since, in fact, no other perspective exists apart from the perspective of the subject. Even Descartes' or Berkeley's methods of doubt ultimately devolve to a greater certainty in the subject, than to the world which is granted substance through this subject's self-belief, egoism, in short. The expressionistic writer explores the subjective perspective and accomplishes an understanding of this epistemological terrain. It has already been shown how Kafka represents deep structure in human existence, and Beckett, like Kafka, takes this

direction and, perhaps, is committed to rendering even deeper structures.

The indefinite image, as minimal or as negative, is an appropriate strategy of representation of subjectivity as "soul." Hillman emphasizes the necessity of "soul" as "the primary metaphor of psychology" which "is a deliberately ambiguous concept resisting all definition" since "soul" is "a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint toward things rather than a thing itself" (16). Soul is a term of indefinite description analogous to the indefinite character of subjectivity itself of which soul is perspective. There is a strong structural coherence between an indefinite representational structure, the indefinite image, and the indefinite perspective of subjectivity within its epistemological limits which, nevertheless, also conscribe the "objective" world (for example, the necessary indeterminacy in quantum mechanics where knowledge is only possible relative to the position of the observer, or subject, and cannot be complete).

Beckett's Not I will provide some illustration of how minimal representation functions. Beckett exposes naturalism as a kind of Midas myth where all is solidly represented, but, ultimately, all this representation results in a sublime and intractable silence. According to Graves, Midas' wish that all he touched be turned into gold was granted by Dionysus who then took back this favor so

that Midas would not starve (281-82). It is highly ironic that this wish for an ordering principle, transformation into gold, should be granted by the god most associated with disorder, and, moreover, that this wish should be renounced in favor of life, however disordered it may be. For Beckett the problem of representation always involves silence and, often, strives toward a representation of silence itself. An emphasis falls on differing versions of representation punctuated by silence, as if representation were to be wrested from silence and not from other representations: this is an important dialectic in Beckett. The mouth as a minimal image juxtaposes speech and silence (its negative function as well as its potential), and this striking image involves the "mouth" and "auditor" figures in Not I. These minimal constructions yield an interpretive richness.

One of the problems in dealing with "Mouth" involves determining identity, usually described in naturalism, but "Mouth," nonetheless, provides a depth of personality. Mary Catanzaro finds in Not I "a kind of stunted violence of the soul" in which "the mouth is both a presence and an absence . . . Thus, it is the debris of life that we see" (47). Catanzaro likens Beckett's play to a radical vision of theater as Artaud's, "a theatre without representation" in which "the female must identify herself with negativity" (46, 41). Here, again, there is a coherence, though reversed, to the underlying structural continuities of

Joyce's "Penelope" and Beckett's The Unnamable. For Catanzano, Not I not only renders an aspect of personality, but it provides an expressionistic representation of abstract personality qualities that may only be inferred from naturalistic drama. Her concern with gender, that is, of "not I" as a representation of the feminine adds to Enoch Brater's enumeration of "I's" in Not I.

Brater notes Beckett's allusive parody of Eliot (done earlier in "Whoroscope") as one expressionistic reading of "Not I," one of distance between Beckett and Eliot (although ironically in "Whoroscope" the effect is achieved through a common "discontinuous form" and an "exuberant system of footnotes" [191]). Another expressionistic reading involves "Mouth's third-person protagonist . . . compulsive in its stubborn refusal to abandon the security of the third-person singular," which Brater traces back to Beckett's signature to the "manifesto" "Poetry Is Vertical":

> the final disintegration of the "I" in the creative act is made possible by the use of a language which is a mantic instrument, and which does not hesitate to adopt a revolutionary attitude toward word and syntax, going even so far as to invent a hermetic language, if necessary (191).

Brater also discusses the proliferation of "I's" throughout Beckett's trilogy where the "tension in [The Unnamable] is thus in the struggle for a new voice to be born," but where "this frustrating search for the elusive 'I' is rich in metaphysical implications" (192-93). Brater also develops a

psychological perspective based on the conflict between Jung's "Persona" ("I") and "Shadow" ("not I"), recalling an image from Film in which Buster Keaton tears "up a series of old photographs of himself" (193, 194-97). In this there is more continuity between Beckett's method and a major representational concern in Kafka.

Brater also develops punning senses of "not I," and this is particularly significant with respect to oneiric representation, which Freud showed often relied on puns. The first of these is "not aye" an example of a Beckett image of "'the screaming silence of no's knife in yes's wound'" where Brater contrasts Joyce's Molly Bloom to "Mouth's monologue [which] is a series of negations" (198). Beckett's complex sense of affirmation with respect to Molly Bloom in The Unnamable has been discussed above; here Beckett's allusion to Molly is more negative, but still sharing the monological form. The second punning sense involves "not eye" connecting by contrast to Beckett's Film, distinguished by its "eye," and Brater finds Not I "brings to the surface our own difficulty in seeing, in perceiving" (198, 199). This perceptual problem has been discussed at length above with respect to Film. Beckett's indefinite image of "not I," in the combined views of Catanzaro and Brater, develops a half-dozen powerful thematic renderings, including: representation of the feminine; linguistic and literary representation through pronouns; expressionistic,

dialogic discourse through allusions; archetypal tensions involving the shadow; representations of the negative (a problem closely connected to the minimal); and representations of perception as a philosophical problem. Beckett connects all these thematic discourses through his minimal imagery in Not I, and this connection illuminates discursive intersections as well.

There is a suggestion that linguistic usage which distinguishes between ego ("I") and other ("not I") misleads through a positive privileging of personal vision (eye) against the negative (culturally feminine or yin) which is viewed as threatening (other, shadow) when, as Beckett appears to contend, all perception is representation, and this egalitarian imaging provides no basis for privilege. A linguistic function which distinguishes between "I" and "you," for example, appears to fill a function of clarity, but since language is a dialectic instrument, such "clarifications" connect to agonistic power, privileging particular parties as in a parent-child relationship. No doubt, many other "discursive intersections" could be derived from this indefinite collage, but in this case indefinite language attacks conventional usage and exposes faulty presuppositions which "unconsciously" inhabit language. These intersections of discourse prepare the way for an abstract recognition that is not rooted in common

grammar; they answer Wittgenstein's formulation of the conflict between language and logic.

Again, Beckett's use of the linguistically simple and negative image phrase "not I" along with the minimal representations of "mouth" and "auditor" (ear) provide an indefinite aggregate of discourse that seems all out of proportion to its "positive" or "natural" qualities. The indefinite image provokes interpretation, with a vengeance, but it also withholds assent from facile interpretations, so interpretative, discursive aggregates result. These aggregates are thought-provoking, and they connect the subjectivities represented in the work with those of the audience. Brater concludes "the theatrical power in this intense monologue is hypnotic, the effect less Cartesian than visceral"; the indefinite image can create a living, not lifelike, art, connecting subjectivities of author and audience (200).

Indefinite Perspectives

Another indefinite image strategy that recurs in Beckett has to do with perspective or narrative point-of-view. This can occur in a variety of ways; some relate to the audience's inability to grasp an entire narrative context, and some relate to indefinite perspectives within the narrative regarding characters or their own

perspectives. Some works that develop indefinite perspective to an intense degree include The Unnamable, How It Is, and The Lost Ones. Setting in The Unnamable is intensely problematic; as indicated before, the voice of the novel inhabits what is usually referred to as an "afterlife," and this study uses the term "astral" to distinguish this kind of representation. "Afterlife" is somewhat misleading in that a definite indication of "death" is absent. On the contrary, although this voice's abode is highly indefinite, this voice indicates a possession of at least some remnants of human form:

> the penis, well now, that's a nice surprise, I'd forgotten I had one. What a pity I have no arms, there might still be something to be wrung from it" (332).

The problem of material sustenance is also ambivalent: "did I say I catch flies? I snap them up, clack!" Moreover, this voice insists on clinging to life: "come come, a little cooperation please, finish dying, it's the least you might do, after all the trouble they've taken to bring you to life" (333). The term "astral" incorporates a possible living existence, including a dreamed existence, consistent with oneiric representation, but it may also include an existence on the "other side" of death, the territory typically considered the soul's abode.

A sense of precision is important with respect to Beckett's writing which rewards an intense concentration, and metaphors need to be chosen carefully when a writer is

set on dismantling them, as is the apparent object of The Unnamable. No names likely indicates no metaphors either. There is no name to be given to the form of this voice's astral existence. Similarly, the pronoun "they" quoted above has no definite antecedent.

The problem of this indefinite antecedent is considerable since the word "they" is repeated so often in this novel. Further, as in the passage above "they" give life to the Unnamable, so they are powerful. Schulz explains that "the Unnamable's language is deeply mythological, but there is no consistent and coherent myth, healing the divisions of this world," but he sees this pronominal problem in a completely expressionistic light:

> it is particularly the Unnamable who fights a running battle against his memory, against the "inventions," against "them," the creatures he has been, because they are "of him," mutilating them, he hopes, beyond recognition. Because they are different from what he is now, the hopefully liberated, they are false (28, 42).

Schulz argues strongly for this expressionistic reading of "they," that they are only the earlier and concomitant forms of the taletellers of Beckett's trilogy. However, there is also a sense of social dialectic, of this voice's battle against agents of social institutions, and all of this voice's predecessors are social outsiders, if not outcasts, so it is unlikely that they represent the agents of traditional institutions.

There is also to be considered this voice's function in its sustained attack against Cartesian thought (see above), and it is very probable that "they" have some function as representatives of Cartesian institutional thought. Kennedy takes a wider view of "they," more indeterminate:

> all the ideas he has received about the world of men had come from "delegates" (another name for the they voices who constantly appear to dictate to the Beckettian narrator, sometimes like messengers from an unwanted Almighty with residual powers, sometimes resembling characters, like Basil). It is "they" who have inculcated in this narrator the few general ideas he has -- of good and evil, of his mother, and "the low-down on God" (p. 14) (143).

This Unnamable's "few general ideas" is part of an expressionistic dialectic in that these appear to refer to "irreducible" elements of social existence, and their conveyance to the Unnamable from some social outside testifies to a more or less indirect presence of some "normal" source to that outside, either directly "delegated" or "conveyed" through disaffected characters. Kennedy discusses particular motifs in The Unnamable, and "they" reappear under the heading "His master's relentless voice" as "'a college of tyrants,' or 'deputies' (p. 29). They are akin to characters who, like Basil/Mahood, also dictate to the narrator" (145). There are strong arguments both for "they" representing only the characters and for "they" representing both characters and other entities ("delegates," "deputies"), but both versions resolve into indeterminacy since even the argument for only the

characters cannot decipher which characters, so "they" remains in any utterance to some degree indeterminate.

The "they who have given life" quoted above comes from the Mahood section of this novel (according to Kennedy) who is "'stuck like a sheaf of flowers in a deep jar'" (147). Just as "they" are indeterminate, so are these characters within The Unnamable: "for the Unnamable and Mahood are "talking" in tandem ('if we are twain, as I say we are,' p. 31) both in the first person, mostly in the present tense," and "the story-telling situation . . . is deliberately blurred in the telling" (145-46). If Mahood's denial of his identity with the voice of the Unnamable marks off Mahood's utterances as distinguishable, it is only in this regard, that is, with this content, that these utterances can be distinguished. This problem is further aggravated with respect to Worm, which Kennedy designates as an "insubstantial presence":

> but it's time I gave this solitary a name, nothing doing without proper names. I therefore baptise him Worm. I don't like it, but I haven't much choice. It will be my name too, when the time comes, when I needn't be called Mahood any more (Kennedy adds this emphasis 147).

Here the recursive narrative game becomes a bit more evident. Under the title, this "Unnamable" voice proceeds by naming itself, from time to time, until it ultimately, without a name, arrives at silence, or, at least, the text stops, but the relationship of these characters, or names, to the Unnamable voice remains indeterminate. Kennedy

concludes there are "two voices -- self-reflection and endless meta-narrational reflections on the text-in-the-making," but these "are more seamlessly interwoven in The Unnamable than in the two previous novels of the trilogy" (144). In other words, structural trends emerge, but regarding particular utterances there emerges a high degree of ambivalence as to matching trends with these utterances.

This is always, to some extent, a narrational problem with most texts, and the usual resolution comes about through considering certain utterances ambivalently as direct character discourse and as indirect authorial discourse. Beckett has made this problem a structural focus of The Unnamable so that Beckett's "voice" and his "character's voices" are indistinguishable, except when specific utterances distinguish them, and all reduces to the Unnamables' voice as direct character discourse and as indirect authorial discourse. However, this reduction cannot easily respect important differences in this text, so the tension between the author's narrational voice and those of his characters is situated as the expressionistic subject of this novel's discourse, emphasizing the inextricable and indeterminate levels of subjectivity that create this text, a text distinguished by its indefinite perspective to the extent that designations concerning levels inside of this narrative can only be tentative.

Much of Beckett's work demands highly structural analysis in order to determine the precise degree of indefinite involvement, but it is unlikely that such analysis would overturn these indefinite trends. Possibly, though, patterns might be discerned where they have not yet been described, since the voluminous comment required upon each of these texts to make such determinations has not been forthcoming. To the extent that Beckett criticism has been able to distinguish general trends in his works which suggest this need for intense commentary, it should be considered still to be in an early or developmental stage.

A somewhat simpler, since more limited, text applying to this problem of indefinite perspective is Beckett's "story" The Lost Ones. This astral representation of a "rubber room" is no longer than some of the celebrated "paragraphs" of The Unnamable, and it is reminiscent of Watt in its frequent invocation of logical description, although, as in Watt, there is every likelihood of some logical unreliability. Still, its more limited size hints at the possibility of an intensive analysis being rewarded. An intensive structural analysis would be required to determine the coherence of the narrative perspective, insofar as whether certain descriptive passages do not impossibly conflict with others, a possible outcome of logical or geometrical unreliability. The terms of description are largely geometrical, "inside a flattened cylinder fifty

metres round and eighteen high for the sake of harmony" (7). Just what sort of harmony is invoked is difficult to perceive, and it has been shown before with respect to Murphy that when Beckett is most precise, he is often most insidious with his intrusion of unreliable elements. About two hundred bodies of all ages and both sexes inhabit this enclosed world of exceedingly dim light and relatively rapid and somewhat extreme temperature fluctuations: "the effect of this climate on the soul is not to be underestimated" (52). However, aside from this sole remark, Beckett's description focuses on the effect on the bodies; for example,

> it [the skin] continues none the less feebly to resist and indeed honourably compared to the eye which with the best will in the world it is difficult not to consign at the close of all its efforts to nothing short of blindness (52-3).

Beckett's serpentine and negative prose contributes to the reader's difficulties in sorting out this description which constitutes one level of indefinite perspective; another level involves the subjects themselves, two hundred nearly completely blind individuals searching. To some extent, indefinite perspective is the subject of this story which considers long-term effects of this environment, sometimes in unexpected ways. Following Beckett's expressionistic method as it has been developed throughout this essay, it is unlikely that a problem like indefinite perspective in the story's subject would not also carry through to an

indefinite narrational perspective itself. Still, the presentation is too formal to easily determine this without a complete mapping of this story's narrational structures.

Part of the cinematic quality of Beckett's writing is also developed in these indefinite texts, insofar as they are also composed of definite elements (compare with Kafka, above). An apparent precursor text to The Lost Ones is "Imagination Dead Imagine." Here a geometric description comes early in the narration:

> diameter three feet, three feet from ground to summit of the vault. Two diameters at right angles AB CD divide the white ground into two semicircles ACB BDA. Lying on the ground two white bodies, each in its semicircle (63).

Beckett's disconnection of this image from the natural world allows for a terse but practical elaboration of this visual image in a formal, imaginative space, like an image in a film, an elaborated frame. Subsequent passages provide for a dynamic or animation: "it is clear however, from a thousand little signs too long to imagine, that they are not sleeping" (66). As with the description of "blindness" above, there is an asymptotic descriptive function; the eye is not quite blind, the bodies not quite still, but the description approaches without encountering this limit of blindness or stillness. The definite quality of this descriptive function coexists with an indefinite quality of this description, and this tension approximates subtle differences beyond the linguistic capacity to describe.

This tension is also related to the theme of entropy, which, later, comes to be a major focus in the writing of Thomas Pynchon. This formal procedure provides an abstraction of fairly definite qualities which call attention to the shortfall between linguistic reference and the natural world. There is a highly ironic quality in "Imagination Dead Imagine" since the imagination is intensely focused into a vision of abstract animation which calls for a death or end to imagination itself, and the reader is conjoined to develop the indefinite qualities of this description through a participatory vision. This short text seeks a similar effect to an animated short film to be constructed in the reader's consciousness, imaginative or astral space.

This whole process is coherent with Jung's idea of creative visualization. Through the printed medium of a text, there is a definite organization of an abstract visualization, with highly indefinite variables. The total effect, or affect on the reader's consciousness, emphasizes the conflation of definite and indefinite qualities in imagination itself. A dialectic tension between "seeing" and "not seeing" shows how the imagination engages the natural world through language, a participatory vision which exposes the limits of language while it exhorts imaginative freeplay. Kennedy notes that Beckett's writing "has affinities with the fictional world of Kafka, though Beckett always disrupts any cluster of quasi-religious images before

they can crystallise into allegory" (145). In many ways this is a relative difference, since it is not easy to draw an interpretive allegory out of Kafka, even though many have tried; Kafka promotes an indefinite kind of allegory, often composed of definite images, dream images. Still, Kafka's development of indefinite images is a precursor to Beckett who develops indefinite images to a far greater extent than Kafka. It is perhaps better to consider how Beckett extends the formal, abstract qualities of writing from a potential in Kafka.

Again, Kafka's dreamspace in its confusion with the natural world in Beckett becomes an imaginative, astral space only distantly connected to the natural world, and what connection there is comes through an expressionistic consideration of language's representational potential. Beckett's work provokes an imaginative montage, analogous to cinema, but the formal qualities of this montage illuminate the limits of language. Beckett likes to describe acute tensions in an asymptotic way, but such tensions structure his writing, as well as provide content for his indefinite descriptions.

The problem of indefinite perspective surpasses even the complexities of The Unnamable in Beckett's How It Is, although these works are closely related. In some ways How It Is resembles some of the logically and linguistically permutated passages in Watt. An early fragment of Comment

c'est (the earlier French version) was published as "L'Image" (1959), providing some indication Beckett's concern with the complexities of image production (Smith 118). For Schulz "How It Is formally constitutes the most elaborate example of the Beckettian 'anti-novel'," and Kennedy notes its congruence to Joyce: "Beckett, like Joyce, has always been haunted by words as 'fundamental sounds'; and in the late texts the aural patterning is intensified, as earlier in The Unnamable, in How It Is and in Play" (29, 161). Such use of language as aural words or images of words tends to bedevil perspective since the organizing priority of the work does not focus on a coherent point-of-view. Further, Sculz notes the unreal temporality with which this novel is invested:

> it is in How It Is that the immeasurability of an existence without time takes on the vast proportions of Hegel's "bad infinity" (schlechte Unendlichkeit) . . . the protagonist calculates with vast numbers (142-53) and repeatedly gasps at the "vast tracts of time" into which his life has vanished (e.g. 20) (106-07).

This mythic temorality combines with mathematic abstraction as well. Susan Brienza explains how

> the narrator tries to place and thus to find himself among imagined millions in an infinite set of ordered pairs arranged along an infinite number line, which he keeps proclaiming is 'not circular' although the structure of the novel obviously is" (31).

The ordered pairs may refer to Cartesian geometry, and an infinite curve is an image of the asymptote. Vast images of both time and space suggest a history of language more than

of personality (although one is represented in terms of the other), and the image of the asymptote suggests the abyss between language and reference, the concept of an infinite approach without closure. There is an intense irony involved with these abstractions since they derive from Descartes, and Beckett makes suspect Cartesian ideas. This irony is increased by his problematic texts in which if language actually achieved closure or direct reference it would be unrecognizable (this leads to the problem of "future" genres below). It should also be noted that terms like "narrator" and "protagonist" in Brienza and Schulz is somewhat reductive, a way of characterizing narrative voice which is deliberately overlooking the complexities of narrative perspective within this novel.

Several times before, it has been necessary to appeal to a metatextual level to make sense of Beckett's complexities, and Smith makes this leap in order to resolve indefinite perspectives in How It Is: "the subject of the book is the composing process itself" (107). Smith finds "the drama of this struggle between inspiration and revision is literally found on every page of How It Is" (113). This novel represents an authorial dialectic, a tension between authorial tendencies: "Beckett's novel is thus a brave attempt to bring onto the page the creative process, a process that remains most mysterious" (Smith 117). In a further irony, Beckett bucks the naturalistic trend toward

the concealment of the author, of the writer masked by representation. If Beckett is representing his thoughts on a work-in-the-making, then distance from author to reader is reduced to a more intimate form, a distance associated with authorial aura.

On the other hand, the appeal to the general authorial level comes about because the reader is unable to validate particular passages in the text to definite narrative structures, such as character or point-of-view. The reader is closer to a participatory creation of the text's significance due to indefinite qualities in the text. Even at this authorial level, an inherent, dialectic tension evolves; there is both an increased sense of authorial intimacy and an undecidability about the author's specific meaning in particular instances. Smith summarizes this tension as a necessary reduction: "at the beginning of part three, Beckett mentions 'the humming-bird known as the passing moment' (p. 103). The moment. The voice. The text. That is <u>all</u> there is" (119).

The interpretation of Beckett's writing forces a theoretical perspective which splits the critical language into two forms or levels. "Voice" in Beckett's text designates the general authorial voice as implied author, but this voice is composed from several indefinite voices. This term, while theoretically reductive, should be recognized in all its dialectic tension as both a unitary

designation and structurally pluralistic form. Indefinite perspective in Beckett brings the reader to the recognition of the inherent complexities of a theoretical language. Critical categories and structures have a limited use; these seem to work best when they reduce the complexities of the text itself. The expressionistic value of indefinite perspectives represented by Beckett is this recognition that a theoretical language is composed of dynamic terms in which dialectic and slippage between forms characterize literary representation.

At the close of this discussion on indefinite perspective in Beckett's writing, a consideration of social or political representation may help to distinguish further Beckett's distance from a didactic mode of writing. Like Kafka, Beckett's political writing is oblique. Stephen Watt notes how "Vivian Mercier regards allusions to natural beauty in Happy Days, How It Is, and Play as evidence of a character's former status as 'upper middle class'" (107). Of course, such images of "natural beauty" are closely connected to the class analysis of naturalistic or didactic writing where the author, a privileged position, instructs the audience, where intelligence is evidenced by "getting the message." The Lost Ones provides some commentary on the problems of didacticism and of political organization. Beckett discusses ideas about the cylinder held by its inhabitants as a kind of religious sorting:

> one school swears by a secret passage branching from one of the tunnels and leading in the words of the poet to nature's sanctuaries. The other dreams of a trapdoor hidden in the hub of the ceiling giving access to a flue at the end of which the sun and other stars would still be shining (18).

Religious terms like "sanctuaries" are further developed: "the partisans of the trapdoor are spared this demon [being "tempted" to "quest" for the tunnel] by the fact that the hub of the ceiling is out of reach" (19). The linguistic indication of religious beliefs is grounded by rapid deployment of associations: "sanctuaries," "demon," "tempted," and "quest." The term "partisans" associates politically, so there are definite indications of a conflated religious and political discourse. The simple demarcation of one school from the other in terms of possibility or impossibility (the hub being out of reach) is complicated by the environment of the cylinder in which all the seekers are highly unlikely to discover anything for which they are searching.

A more political section immediately follows:

> all that is needed is a score of determined volunteers joining forces to keep it [a ladder arrangement] upright with the help if necessary of other ladders acting as stay or strut. An instant of fraternity. But outside their explosions of violence this sentiment is as foreign to them as to butterflies. And this owing not so much to want of heart or intelligence as to the ideal preying on one and all. So much for this inviolable zenith where for amateurs of myth lies hidden a way out to earth and sky (20-1).

Here politically linguistic usage is emphasized, especially "fraternity" in the French tradition. There is also a balancing effect concerning the possible/impossible dialectic of the two schools, for through an organized effort the "hub" might be reached. Unfortunately, the only unified action comes through mob attacks on those who violate the protocol of the ladders. Thus, it is neither strictly impossible to reach the hub nor to organize politically, but neither is likely to occur within this environment. The naturalist term "butterflies," a symbol for the soul or psyche, both implies the effect of this environment on the soul (quoted above) and marks the imagery as associated with class individualism where individual concerns take precedence over social concerns, as with free capitalism.

These linguistic complexities support a satiric discourse which implicates religion and politics in a common institutional endeavor. This institutional force, justified by its "idea" -- another linguistic characterization, for an idea is "named" -- separates the searchers through their own interpretations which invariably conflict. Common action is thus prevented while the idea bears the name of a common cause, such as "fraternity," and the linguistic appearance of common action is upheld while linguistic interpretations maintain conflicts which inhibit the actualization of the idea's potential. In addition, biological images provide a

support for social structures since the shape and rubberlike material of the structure indicate phallic qualities and since the ladders themselves provide a structural metaphor for the DNA molecule. Clearly, Beckett develops an allegorical potential on several levels through this bio-social context, but his allegory is intuitive and indefinite; it is achieved through the resonance of suggestive associations rather than through definite indications of direct correspondences or references.

The Lost Ones exhibits many common traits to Kafka's parable "Before the Law," even if a definite allusion is not pronounced, although an allusion is possible. This goes somewhat, but not far, beyond Beckett's acknowlegement of his serious reading of Kafka's The Castle (Sandbank 55). The conflation of politics with religion, the subject as "soul," the development of the text into commentary on its basic situation or story, the immanence of violence, and the inability of the subject (multiplied by Beckett) to see the "reality" of its situation all strike common chords between these texts. Even Beckett's focus on linguistic problems with their concommitant logic is not far from Kafka's careful commentaries within his parable; both suggest satire, and, ultimately, both provide an indefinite allegory. Although both suggest the possibility of a solution to their tangled webs, neither seems to imply that such a solution will clearly champion any institutional

perspective, and the invitation to interpret more deeply will take the reader into a realm of abstract paradox probably more valuable for the questions which will be raised than for a definite resolution, yet such questions are valued as the object of expressionistic writing.

Beckett's politics, as derived from his texts, remain rather indefinite, perhaps nihilistic, like Kafka. Beckett and Kafka clearly perceive a potential for improvement in the human community, but they mainly portray the betrayal of this potential. If this is merely indirection or the product of direct concentration is basically undecidable, since the obstacles to this potential are so formidably represented. Nevertheless, Beckett and Kafka present in these texts the suggestion of a line of discursive inquiry which ought not to be ignored by those who would analyze "the social mystery."

In a sense, the problem of indefinite perspective leads to the problem of indefinite genres, for if point-of-view is indeterminate, then perhaps the organization of the work itself may be indescribable. To a certain extent, the genres of black humor and black fantasy are indicated by certain forms of indeterminacy; that is, they can be distinguished from more directly positive oneiric representation, although this is a problem of relativity. If a text is represented as a dream, isn't this different from a text in which dream elements inhabit the story? Do

not certain texts, especially some of Beckett's, turn more or less completely away from mimetic representation? There is a suggestion in Beckett that if "true" mimetic representation were to occur it would be unrecognizable, for it would appear within an indefinite structure as just another indeterminate element. In at least one instance, Beckett leads us to the difficult problem of the existence of "future" genres.

Future Genres

Within the image-genre grid, those genres indicated within the "real time" segment that involve a future temporality do so in a rhetorical way. The "positive" genres of science fiction and science fantasy, the "SF" genres, designate the continuance of an aspect of the rhetorical present, or contemporaneity, into a future tense as a dialectic proposition. The simple notion of spaceships derives from vehicular conveyance, cars are literally spaceships in that they convey a subject through space, and outer space travel is a dialectic extension of this idea which presumes technology to be sufficiently powerful to overcome technical barriers to outer-space travel. These SF genres employ expressionism through this dialectic discourse, for the very selection of continuing aspects is a metatextual provocation more prominent than the selection of

details in mimetic representation, and the rhetorical use of a future tense emphasizes this prominence.

The expressionistic complements to these genres, surrealism and tragicomedy, negate this definite aspect of the SF genres and assert the continuance of indeterminate or absurd structures into the rhetorical future. These expressionistic genres undermine rhetorical positivism, as in Beckett's Waiting for Godot, where the future is an extension of the indeterminacy of the present, tragicomedy. Surrealism juxtaposes real elements with unreal ones and provokes a discourse which extends into the rhetorical future this indeterminate mixture of the mundane with the mythic. The efforts of the surrealists are important especially insofar as they portray the dynamic of oppositional conceptions of reality of which culture is composed. The image-genre grid itself functions through the consideration of the relative weight given to these oppositional forces in image production. Another aspect of these expressionistic future genres is that they open out to those other genres based on unreal temporality. The rhetorical enunciation of a future tense as a dialectic device derives some of its power from the possibility that it may be predictive; for example, the novels of Jules Verne came to be predictive; one now can say, to some extent, that Verne predicted the future.

From a realistic perspective, the only predictions of the future that occur have already been proved by the past, like Verne's submarine. However, this realistic constraint does not inhibit the production of texts explicitly about the future, prophetic texts. "Revelation" in the Bible and the "Centuries" of Nostradamus pose a particular problem to the realistic analysis of literature since they present themselves as prophecy and as literature. Further, they are distinguished by the use of a highly symbolic language which complicates interpretation, an unreal language of images. This unreal language proves a sufficient barrier to their predictions being proved by the past because only interpretations can be proved, and these may not be correct, but if they were correct they would go unrecognized due to the linguistic complexity of their presentations. Regardless, the idea of coincidence seems a frail explanation in the face of Nostradamus' fairly prodigious poetical works. Nostradamus is a particular case in which the suggestion of an actually prophetic text is very strong, although in many respects, interpretation still bears a crucial role, not to mention the problem of indirection in political discourse (the prophet of doom whose dark message may inspire a progressive movement).

There are also image machines which purport to predict the future, to which a measure of literary value accrues; these include the Tarot and the I Ching. Again, for

literary analysis the problem of prophecy is balanced by the complexity of the composition itself. These predictive machines apply highly complex models of the real in abstract forms meant to reference any particular moment with a predictive power for the future. Of course, a participatory interpretation is the key to their function, but, unlike the "prophetic" texts of Nostradamus or Revelations, Tarot and I Ching themselves insist upon interpretation. These predictive machines explicitly call for interpretation, for their significance is only fully demonstrable with respect to a temporal moment enunciated in the form of a question about a real situation. Without such an inquiry, these texts are impressive in their development of abstraction into a metaphysical model, yet without the function of a temporal application they remain indefinitely as model structures. A rather common, though superstitious, use of the Bible involves the reading of random passages and their application to a real situation; an even more mundane example involves the use of Chinese fortune cookies. Nevertheless, such methods derive from a perspective which views text as both a part of and an indication of the real, and this notion, although indefinite, remains provocative.

The question of the relation of text to the world is an essential matter regarding the nature of literature, and the typology of mimetic and expressionistic representations develops from this question. That art imitates life

indicates how text interprets the phenomenal world, and such interpretation emphasizes particular phenomenal qualities through a choice of detail and through a hierarchical ordering of discourses attached to those selected details, mimetic representation. That life imitates art follows from this proposition of interpreted phenomena, insofar as this mimetic emphasis produces rhetorical power; the "truth" is the subject of mimetic emphasis, but it is projected as an objective correlate to enforce a sense of closure between language and the world.

The recognition of this relationship between literary text and the phenomenal world provokes the production of texts in which mimetic emphasis is the subject of inquiry, more than its object of production, and, consequently, mimetic emphasis is more distrubuted throughout text, just as emphasis is distributed throughout the phenomenal world. In other words, a particular emphasis does not attain hierarchical truth status, since it is constantly competing with other discourses, other versions of emphasis inhabiting the same text. Thus, the principle of life imitating art leads to the production of expressionistic texts characterized by oneiric representation. The mimetic imitation of an objective "life" is replaced in expressionism by an imitation of an objective and subjective field, with the understanding that the subjective field is closer to the source of production of expression. The

common factor of these aesthetic slogans is reflection, and the form by which art and life enter into a reflective relationship in text is described by these differing modes of representation, of naturalism and of expressionism. The expressionistic text frustrates a reader who seeks answers because it presents questions, often progressively more complex questions, by, for example, insisting upon the real qualities of a subjective image, like Kafka's archetypal "scarab" or Beckett's "holes" (see below).

However, if these modes only describe particular degrees or types of reflection, then the question must be asked whether a non-reflective form of literary representation is possible at all. If all language devolves into representation, is it possible not to represent something through writing? Even writing which is undeniably incorrect, misrepresentation, remains connected to representation in some definite mode. All this may seem tautolgical, since language represents, but such a tautology becomes more interesting when writers apply ambitions to develop or enlarge the limits of representation itself. This occurs with regard to oneiric or astral representation when the context of reference is enlarged to include a subjective universe or descriptions of consciousness in addition to the more objective or concrete world of natural events. Just as writers may blend representations of the objective world with representations of subjectivity,

writers may also choose to radically revise commonplace notions of temporality by representing nonlinear, nonsequential time.

If it is not possible to escape some form of representation, then such a temporal representation as an actual futurity should be, at least partially, accurate. Otherwise, such temporality may represent the unrepresentable itself. The theoretical possibilities involving real future temporality include unrepresentability, which would indicate that language cannot always represent something, the basis for a literally nonmimetic writing; or, an actual representation of the future as either correct or incorrect. Incorrect future temporal representation still provokes an inquiry into what has actually been represented, since this is not a nonrepresentational form, and correct representation must await the future representation to elapse into a past representation in order for the common recognition to occur that the writing is predictive, so real future representation must be unrecognizable at the time it is composed. The future text must be indefinite, and only interpretation (the reader participating in the text) can be applied to its particular comtemporaneity, and this must be recognized as an inherent characteristic of language itself, since the whole question of future representation essentializes writing itself. Writing's claim to a truth

must continue into the future, or else writing ceases. Either nonrepresentational writing is possible or it is possible to represent the future, and this possible form of future representation is unrecognizable or indefinite. There either must occur a complete break between writing and its context or else all writing is essentially indefinite, and this divergence characterizes the concept of "truth." With Beckett this discussion has shown that nonrepresentation is only achieved by silence, which is not writing, so any writing is representative for Beckett, and much of his literary accomplishment derives from his development of various permutations of representation.

Again, text produces a paradoxical logic: for a text to be "true," it may only represent "truth" in an indefinite way, and recognition of this "truth" becomes strictly a matter of interpretation -- in this sense, true significance is almost out of the author's hands, for there is no logical test that assures a reader's interpretation coheres with that of the author. On the other hand, a "true" text may be nonrepresentational, but such a formulation defies the characterization of language as a representational device, both in theory and in practice, and this is logically unlikely, if not completely invalid.

The Bible has long been considered the sacred text of western civilization, and the interpretation of "Revelation" grows more widespread both by religious practioners and by

artists. The John Carpenter film Prince of Darkness is one of the more interesting of many films devoted to this subject. It has already been shown how Beckett interweaves New Testament parables into absurdist presentations, and Beckett may also be concerned with the interpretation of "Revelation" (see below). That a sacred text should contain prophetic writing indicates the inclusive reference of religious writing; clearly the context of such writing includes the future as well as the past. In other words, the sacred word should have no limits set upon its reference, and, in this sense, text approaches a wider purview than the phenomenal world itself which precedes through temporal increments. The writings of Nostradamus also develop a deep sentiment of religious devotion; it may fairly be said that this work aspires to sacral writing. The problem of prophetic writing is intimately connected with the production of the sacred text, but prophecy is rarely used as a justification for sacral writing, and this is probably the reason for Nostradamus' relative obscurity. The idea that text is capable of unlimited reference is a likely assumption with regard to the sacred text, and this idea is being proposed subtly, but with increasing frequency, by several writers.

Neil Schmitz describes Ishmael Reed's Mumbo Jumbo as "a more sophisticated and complex mode [than Reed's other works], a composite narrative containing a variety of texts,

the most important of which (the sacred text -- the Book of Thoth) is never revealed." Scmitz goes on to explain that Reed's thesis involves a liturgy seeking its text (135). The prophetic quality of Reed's sacred text is contained in its title, for The Book Of Thoth is the title under which Aleister Crowley wrote his essay of commentary on the Tarot and its divinatory methods. Reed's character Buddy Jackson emphasizes this connection:

> we learned what we had always suspected, that the Masonic mysteries were of a Blacker origin than we thought and that this man had in his possession a Black sacred Book and how they were worried that we would find out and wouldn't learn that the reason they wanted us out of the mysteries was because they were our mysteries! (222).

A probable source for Reed can be found in Crowley's essay on "Atu XXI. The Universe":

> it becomes reasonable to argue from analogy that since the end must beget the beginning, the symbolism will follow; hence blackness is also attributed to the sun, according to a certain long-hidden tradition. One of the shocks for candidates in the "Mysteries" was the revelation "Osiris is a black god" (118).

The complex and longstanding history of bickering among occult societies need not be developed further here, except to note that Crowley was probably censored for the amount of secret doctrine that he published in his fairly extensive writings. With respect to Beckett, it is worth noting that Yeats was a member of the "Mysteries," and considering the concern for a racial metaphysics connected with the Tarot, there is probably also some connection with the Irish

tradition. The indefinite status of Tarot (as "Book of Thoth") in Reed's Mumbo Jumbo provides an example of the occultation of the sacred text; its indefinite presence signals the problems of recognition. Reed's presentation of his text with its facsinating collection of photographs recalls Breton's novels and the methods of surrealism. The discussion of Beckett's How It Is (above) suggests the possibility of an intuitive component in Beckett's composition, for if this novel is indeed a portrayal of the struggle between authorial voices in the process of composition, then the subjection of such a text to any extensive revision would cramp its presentation, gilding the proverbial lily.

All this provides a preface to a curious development in Beckett's novel Watt concerning the introduction of characters. Very early on, Beckett introduces a character named Mr. Nixon who engages in a dialogue for several pages. Nixon seems not a particularly strange name for a character; indeed there is a certain hipness to it since "nix" is slang for "no" and "on" suggests a mode, a negative character by such a name, since "no on" suggests a negative mien. Also, "no" and "on" are linguistic reversals of each other, and each word has great significance with respect to the theme and tone of all Beckett's oeuvre. Moreover "no on" is short of the letter "e" to produce "no one," a name resonant of

Ulysses' adventures, but also a name which suggests that it has been made up, a fake name or a name for a fake.

There is significant linguistic complexity here, but the appearance of this name in the text takes on a greater significance when, later, another character introduces himself to Watt: "My name is Spiro, said the gentleman./ Here then was a sensible man at last" (27). The 1953 copyright for Watt stands almost twenty years ahead of the political scenario in which the names of "Nixon" and "Spiro" would figure prominently, a scenario Beckett himself would witness. The sense of a deja vu projection into the future of these passages is in no way mitigated by the fact that Watt is concerned with issues of the sacred text, and that its character "Mr. Knott" is the closest to a godlike figure in all Beckett's writing and is the precursor to Beckett's indefinite character "Godot." There are of course "sensible" congruences between the linguistic structures of "Nixon" and "Knott," and Beckett's utterance concerning Spiro -- "a sensible man at last" --is rendered extremely ambivalent both with regard to the characters of this novel and to the later political situation marked by the name "Spiro." Nonetheless, Beckett has provided an image of futurity, of unreal futurity by the image-genre grid, presented in a natural, indeed, mundane language, full of muted linguistic complexities. Such a passage provides an example of prophetic writing through its indefinite quality

and through the unrecognizability of its prophetic force until events make it unmistakable.

This intuitive leap really cannot be dismissed as mere coincidence, since the text is already loaded with the character of sacred writing and since coincidence itself is a concept which masks a nonrepresentational character of writing, itself likely an invalid concept. Williams refers to such propositions as "necessarily paradoxical assertions that, while not formal contradictions . . . , could not possibly be true because their truth would defeat the conditions of their own assertability" (347). After all, for Beckett language is representational, but such a use of "coincidence" seeks to deny what has ultimately come to be seen as a representation, albeit before the fact, of a close association of two names which, in fact, have come to be closely associated. If prophecy occurs in writing, which seems to some degree likely, then this passage by Beckett shows its occurence in an ironic, sacred text, of an indefinite and unrecognizable future temporality.

An Astral Image

This consideration of Beckett's indefinite image will conclude with an example of spatial indefinition, in that indefinite forms of astral space are presented with the definite character of their not being representations of

mimetic space and that these forms portray a totality of oneiric representation indicating an astral space. In The Unnamable, during the "Worm" section Beckett presents a spatial environment for Worm:

> . . . but here it's never dark either, yes, here it's dark, it's they who make this grey, with their lamps. When they go, when they go silent, it will be dark, not a sound, not a glimmer, but they'll never go, yes, they'll go, they'll go silent perhaps and go, one day, one evening, slowly, sadly, in Indian file, casting long shadows, toward their master, who will punish them, or who will spare them, what else is there, up above, for those who lose, punishment, pardon, so they say (364-65).

Beckett opposes one form of dark with another, the "grey"; presumably the other is black, that it is not dark and dark probably indicates not contradiction as much as a small difference in an asymptotic description of more and of less complete darkness. This indefinite strategy is likely a precursor to the indefinite stages of darkness and blindess in The Lost Ones; indeed, this passage indicates "them" as "losers" equivalent to "lost ones." Some of the previous analysis can be brought to bear on a possible exegesis of this problematic passage. Again, the indefinite pronoun "they" recurs in a sense somewhat removed from that of "they" as precursor characters to the "voice" and "Worm," for it is hard to imagine Beckett's alienated characters reporting to "their master." Subsequently, their master interrogates them:

> What have you done with your material? We have left it behind. But commanded to say whether yes

> or no they filled up the holes, have you filled up the holes yes or no, they will say yes and no, or some yes, others no, at the same time, not knowing what the master wants, to his question.

The indefinite logical structure of the forms of darkness is paralleled by the "yes" and "no" answers with respect to the "holes." This logical parallel suggests that the filling of the holes connects to the formation of one form of darkness or the other, and the passage continues to confirm this reading:

> But both are defendable, both yes and no, for they filled up the holes, if you like, and if you don't like they didn't, for they don't know what to do, on departing, whether to fill up the holes or, on the contrary, leave them gaping wide. So they fixed their lamps in the holes, their long lamps, to prevent them from closing of themselves, it's like potter's clay, their powerful lamps, lit and trained on the within, to make him think they are still there, notwithstanding the silence, or to make him think the grey is natural . . .

Here "natural" is a term used to distinguish the "grey" from the other form of darkness, but this distinction from the "natural" also calls up the context of natural space, from which this space "within" is distinguished. The other form of darkness, a more extreme form, unlit, also is opposed to this "natural," but it is also "natural," or complete, darkness, an asymptotic darkness within, apart from the "natural" world, naturally a complete darkness. Beckett has defined two forms of unnatural space, the dark and the grey, by distinguishing through the presence of the lamps in the holes two asymptotic forms of darkness, apart from the natural world where, perhaps, the master is. Worm occupies

an astral space, an environment determined by "holes" and "lamps." Later in the narrative, the "voice" will explain, beyond his "Worm" phase:

> . . . what is it, a little hole, you go down into it, into the silence, it's worse than the noise . . . what is it, a little hole, in the wilderness (395).

However this "present" quickly becomes the "past":

> I've been away, done something, been in a hole, I've just crawled out, perhaps I went silent, no, I say that in order to say something, in order to go on a little more, you must go on a little more . . . (395).

This past and present distinction helps to mark off sections of this narrative: Worm talks about the holes as an environmental phenomenon, while the "voice," no longer Worm, describes a "hole" where, perhaps, Worm was to be found, an insubstantial existence. Also, the term "wilderness" carries a sacred load, for in the Bible the wilderness is the space where men become prophets, John the Baptist is one of many examples. Beckett's use of this term signals his development of a sacred, prophetic text, with his characteristic levels of irony.

Clearly, these passages are highly indefinite, but they carry a definite suggestion of an astral space, or "afterlife," with certain characteristics. Beckett's paradoxical style is marked by the copresence of the definite and the indefinite to an even greater extent than Kafka's. However, the preceding discussion has examined how Beckett comes to use certain images, for example, the lamps

with their attendant biblical allusions in the plays and the asymptotic descriptions of light in The Lost Ones. Insofar as these images come to be more precisely delineated in subsequent works, they may provide some help in determining their use in the more fundamental, and indefinite, The Unnamable.

When "they" return to their "master" and report that they have left their "lamps" in the "holes," one may consider that these lamps refer to the Bible, to spiritual light, a connection strengthened by the abode of the "master" in the sky, or "azure." The book of "Revelation" contains several references to "lamps" and a reference to the parable of the wedding feast (see above): "The angel said to me, 'Write this: "Happy are those who are invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb!"'" (Rev. 19.9). References to lamps occur with respect to the fall of Babylon, "no more shall the light of the lamp appear in you" (Rev. 18.23); with respect to the new Jerusalem, "There shall be no more night, nor will they need the light of lamp or sun" (Rev. 22.5); with respect to the seven churches, "the seven lamps are the seven churches themselves" (Rev. 1.20); and, with respect to the angel of the church at Ephesus, "repent, and do as once you did. If you do not, I will come to you and remove your lamp from its place" (Rev. 2.5). There is a structural congruence between Beckett's indefinite use of "lamps" and "holes" and the indefinite language of this book

of St. John which connects "lamps" to the light of God, as churches or as a sign of faith (something established earlier with respect to the parable of the wedding feast) at least until the coming of the new Jerusalem when there will be no more darkness.

The significance of comparing the contexts of "Revelation" with The Unnamable does not only derive from the structural congruence of indefinite language, but also from the fact that "Revelation" itself proposes an "unnamable" entity: "The beast [who] was allowed to mouth bombast and blasphemy" (Rev. 13.5). There is a riddle given concerning the beast's name:

> (This calls for skill; let anyone who has intelligence work out the number of the beast, for the number represents a man's name, and the numerical value of its letters is six hundred and sixty-six) (Rev. 13.18).

So one sense of The Unnamable may refer to this unnamed beast of Revelations, an entity in another indefinite (and prophetic) text which contains a number of definite references to "lamps." Beckett's "voice" appears to desire the darkness, disparaging "them" and "their master" alike, so The Unnamable may stake some claim to blasphemy. The absolute antagonism between this "voice" and those agents who oversee its existence, as well as its pervasive desire for silence, implicate this "voice" in a struggle of cosmic proportions, an Armageddon of words and images, of language itself. One may be reminded of Poe's portrait of the devil

in "William Wilson," but Beckett's portrait is more sympathetic. Clearly, there is some sense in which Beckett's text aspires to this "allowed" enunciation of "bombast" and "blasphemy" described in the prophecy of "Revelation."

Put succinctly, Beckett's "devil" is the "shadow" (in the Jungian sense) of language itself. Beckett's strategy of indefinition in The Unnamable calls attention to a general, linguistic alter-ego, for languages' reference is systemic. Naturalistic language and its extension into the supernatural is rooted in religious significance, just as the natural world is argued as proof for God's existence and as what is natural derives from what is perceived as religiously moral. Such a system operates through inclusion and exclusion with excluded terms being "unnamed," literally unthinkable. Beckett explores this world of unknown reference in The Unnamable. His narrative "voice" denies the signifiers of the natural world from within an "unnatural" or astral space. This denial has as its ultimate goal, silence, an ultimate denial, but this "voice's" journey through discourse individually denies systemic references all along the way. Moreover, the foregoing discussion of the definite image indicates that for Beckett silence likely validates all representation through its own nonrepresentability: only silence is not represented.

Beckett's emphatic indefinition opens language to new forms and concepts which are indirectly defined through denials of systemic significance; probably the most obvious example involves this "voice's" narrative incarnations, as Mahood, as Worm, as "voice," etc. Beckett develops a new narrative form where each entity is, at times, both distinct and included within "voice." This indefinite strategy denies narrative conventions of author, narrator, and character, and "voice's" continuance demonstrates how narrative structures are actually indefinite structures. Jakobson describes this problem in writing:

> ambiguity is an intrinsic, inalienable character of any self-focused message, briefly, a corollary feature of poetry . . . The supremacy of the poetic function over the referential function does not obliterate the reference but makes it ambiguous. The double-sensed message finds correspondence in a split addressor, in a split addressee, as well as in a split reference (42).

Beckett plays with the inherent quality of language to be referential. If language essentially names things, then Beckett endeavors to "split" language into "things" which are named and "things" which cannot be named, and this split demonstrates both the exclusive referentiality of language and a conceptual territory of indirection which is outside of direct referentiality.

"Unbelieving. Questions, hypotheses, call them that"; Beckett's emphasis on the performative as provisional undercuts the referencing system which names (291). Disbelief, interrogation, and possibilities or potentials

make up The Unnamable, just as Beckett says it will in this passage from his opening to this novel. Beckett's unique accomplishment through his strategies of indefinition is the splitting of language and writing into opposed territories. He not only indicts the natural in its systemic exclusion, but he also provides a sense of that which naturalism excludes; through his abstract, astral field of reference, Beckett reveals the inherent disorder within the reference of writing, though his metaphysical gaming stops short of ordering this other realm, this "silence." Beckett's themes of entropic, or indefinite, reference and of the habitation of language by images are later developed by the post-cinematic writers Thomas Pynchon and William Burroughs. Burroughs' dominant metaphor of language as virus points to alternative referentiality while Pynchon explores entropy and communication theory.

Conclusions

Although Beckett's writing requires an intense concentration in order to develop interpretation, his work rewards such effort. These texts exemplify the problematic tension between surface and substance which is engendered by the contact mode of image signification. On the surface, Beckett's texts present an image of textuality itself; often, this surface is of such complexity that only a

reductive response to it is possible: it looks like text, but it resists facile interpretation. Nonetheless, this difficult surface yields a rich substance, as has been shown by the number of patient scholars who have found in Beckett's work an allusive complexity, a sophisticated philosphical intelligence, an acute sense of linguistic theory, and a broad field of participatory, interpretive play. A further testimony to the substance of Beckett's work is that it clearly requires even more precise scholarly attention for a more complete description and interpretation of his writing to emerge.

The description of Beckett's style as cinematic has served to emphasize how his text consists of image montage and, more importantly, the significance of the montage text with respect to problems of representation, particularly of linguistic referentiality. Beckett demonstrates the potential within the montage text to develop new abstract structures and alternative forms of representation. By exposing the presuppositions of naturalistic mimesis, Beckett is able to develop oneiric representation into an astral form suitable to representations of forms of consciousness; Beckett replaces religious naturalism with the astral perspective of soul, of ubiquitous consciousness. The surface distinction of definite and indefinite images in Beckett's writing begins a line of investigation which leads to its resolution at a level of metatextual clarity,

deriving important conclusions concerning abstract representations, asymptotic referentiality (the problem of entropy), and the relation of text to temporality and the world.

This study began by noting important aspects of Beckett's style: the prevalence of negative, indefinite structures; its cinematic construction; and, its densely allusive quality. Like Kafka's, Beckett's allusions are not easily recognizable, and this is indicative of how Kafka and Beckett wrench their allusions away from their traditional contexts, examining them as a matter of form. Such allusiveness exemplifies Benjamin's characterization of the liquidation of tradition by the reproduction of image. The heuristic division of Beckett's writing into definite and indefinite image forms provided a method for the examination of particular images and the discourses associated with them. Beckett has produced definite forms of images tailored to a wide variety of contact media and generic characteristics. Probably more than any other writer, Beckett has illustrated the potentials of expressionistic writing by providing texts exemplary of contact diversity and of generic variation.

Paradoxically, Beckett has developed a complex discourse out of a style easily characterized as negative. Definite images provide examples of direct negativity, of indirection, of misdirection, of minimalism (indirect

negativity), and of definite structures leading to indefinite contexts. In fact, most instances of the definite in Beckett lead to forms of indefinition. Film not only provides a montage of definite images, but it also develops an interpretive discourse dealing with essential problems of the cinematic medium and of representation of the self. These most prominently include the problems of perception as representation, in which perception itself becomes a doubtful phenomenon, and the recognition of silence as the axis of representation, where only nothing can be perceived without being simultaneously represented.

The definite characteristic of allusiveness in Beckett's writing, to Kafka, to Joyce and to Proust, shows how Beckett engages these writers in dialectic play. The perhaps surprising profusion of Biblical allusions in Beckett's writing illustrates his dialectical disengagement from traditional contexts. Beckett's allusions to traditional sources, as with Kafka, tend toward a demystification of traditional contexts. Beckett's allusions directly focus on the problems of language and referentiality. With respect to mythic allusion, Beckett engages in a demythification wherein he provides an astral space for the recreation of mythic structures, and Beckett's presentation of ritual allows for the recognition of writing as a Heideggerian techne, an instrument that both reveals and conceals. This paradoxical essence of writing suggests

that indefinition is an essential feature of language. However, if indefinition is the ultimate end, there are many definite pathways to this recognition, and Beckett's presentation of varieties of the absurd provides a definite basis for generic classifications, such as those presented in the image-genre matrix.

Beckett's development of philosophical allusion is almost wholly negative with respect to Descartes and to philosophical attitudes which derive from Descartes, either directly or structurally. On the other hand, this study has recognized in Beckett philosophical affinities for Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and, to a certain extent, to Hegel. Again, Beckett's dialectic stance against the truth claims of more traditional forms of philosophy drives his method of indefinition which makes truth unrepresentable, but which, nevertheless, provides a context for the representation of complex abstraction. Ultimately, Beckett's use of the definite image emphasizes the limits of definition at the same time that it reveals the necessity of indefinite representation. Beckett develops a form of writing antagonistic to naturalistic didacticism, but his indefinite strategies suggest discursive alternatives.

The major forms of indefinition in Beckett included in this study are minimalism, indefinite perspectives, indefinite (real future) genres, and indefinite (astral) spatial representation. Each of these problematic image

strategies provides discursive literary value. Minimalism has definite and indefinite components, but its negative and indefinite qualities suggest its appropriateness to the indefinite perspective of the soul, a perspective to which, according to Hillman, the image signifies in a multifaceted rhetoric. Minimal representation also emphasizes the connection, or rather, the abyss, between language and silence, indicating the problem of referentiality. Herein, one finds Beckett's formulation of reference as entropic, for significance tends to disorder, but a complete disorder is not possible, just as there is no such state as complete entropy, or absolute disorder. This is a common property to physics and to information theory; this represents the difficulty in the quest for silence, which could correspond to a state of complete entropy.

The indefinite strategy of minimalism shares with the strategy of indefinite perspectives an interpretative richness. The positive lack with respect to representation enforces a participatory discourse derived from a collaboration of author, text, and reader. This is also an essential feature of image representation, for the image must be interpreted, yet the virtual quality of the image only manifests in a plurality of specific interpretations. Indefinite perspectives situated in an astral space provide images of the creative consciousness where no names obtain, since language has excluded these phenomena, and where

narrative structures become indistinct, as, indeed, these structures are essentailly a complex of relative forms of voicing. The referential capability of language in this astral realm becomes asymptotic; reference can only approach, but never arrive at, its object, for the axis is silence. Regarding political imagery, Beckett shares with Kafka a strategy of negativity and indefinition characterized by the complex allegorical mode described by Benjamin. Beckett's The Lost Ones is an equivalent text to Kafka's "Before the Law," not only in an allusive sense, but as an alternative method of developing a similar discourse.

The development of indefinite perspectives leads to the recognition of indefinite genres, of genres in a real future tense, the problem of prophecy. Beckett's writing ennables the recognition of the referential principle of the sacred text, that if this text is incapable of definite representation, it is also incapable of nonrepresentation. Again, paradoxically, text must be capable of representation of the future and, therefore, of the world -- the mimetic dream -- but text always remains to some extent unrecognizable in its ultimate reference. Language can only approach reference. Nevertheless, Beckett is capable of producing texts which are equivalent to sacred texts and which abstract the sacred text into its formative principles, revealing the drives and desires which produce the sacred text in all their futile splendor.

Finally, the investigation of particular astral images reveals a dark territory which the system of language does not represent. Beckett suggests that language itself has a shadow, a territory unrepresented, or excluded, by the systematic progress of language from its referential desire for the "truth" to the traditional, institutional versions of how this "truth" has been achieved, when, in fact, only illusions of truth have been achieved. Beckett provides a wider universe of representation, one of more complex and more diverse illusions without names, a realm where language comes to know itself in its instantaneous recognition and disfigurement of reference. Beckett provides the mirror in which the dream of language may recognize itself, both what language can do and all that it has failed to do. Beckett has also shown that there is more that language can do, for his texts provide a glimpse into language's potential achievements. Beckett has created a literature from a theoretical language. Such a theoretical language may provide the capability for philosophical and scientific descriptions of increasingly complex phenomena.

General Conclusions

Where before theorists looked to the understanding of words and language in order to describe literature and cinema, perhaps now theorists will appreciate the importance

of understanding the image in culture. Postmodern culture is complex, an aggregate of many different forms. The Image-Genre Grid elaborates these forms with a greater precision than have previous models. Moreover, since this elaboration is both inclusive and flexible, it provides a ground for worthwhile discussion among professionals and in the classroom. This systemic approach to culture will eliminate much confusion of terms, such as "absurd" (which seldom conveys a precise notion). More importantly, a better appreciation of the relationship between theory and discourse will be forthcoming, since the manipulation of cultural images requires a theoretical attitude. This study has demonstrated how Kafka and Beckett could only have accomplished their works with a clear, theoretical view towards their respective effects.

A better appreciation of text should also be forthcoming. In some regards, text can never accomplish what some have hoped it would, that is provide accurate descriptions. Due to the entropic quality of reference, some meaning will always escape. This textual entropy undermines perception as well as representation, since any distinction between the two possesses an arbitrary character. Paradoxically, text is also capable of transmitting more than has been exprected of it. Kafka and Beckett both provide the sense of a contact with the future; they hardly need to be blamed if that future is not

promising. The presence of a real future or truth can be transmitted by text, but in an ocean of representation who can hope to recognize this presence before it is past?

NOTES

Chapter One

1.1 "Various kinds of residual orality as well as the 'literate orality' of the secondary oral culture induced by radio and television awaits in-depth study," Orality and Literacy, p. 160; it is not the intent of this study to reduce the specific differences of radio, television, computers, and cinema to a unitary cinematic rubric, but rather to indicate the copresence of these modes with the filmic mode, which also contributed to the development of "secondary orality."

1.2 Melville's novel ends with the description of the sinking of the Pequod; with the destruction of this point of view, this representational stability on an ocean of chaos, no further story details are forthcoming, such as the final condition of Moby Dick. What continuance is provided in the epilogue is owed to the vehicle of the "coffin life-buoy," a fragment of the ship and a representational surrogate of it, Moby-Dick, p. 470.

1.3 Jennie Skerl marks the origin of the Beats with the forming of this literary "triumvirate":

> The meeting of Burroughs, Kerouac, and Ginsberg in 1944 was the beginning of the Beats as a literary and social movement, although none of them would publish anything for years, and they certainly had no consciousness of having founded a group or movement, William Burroughs, p. 9.

1.4 Jameson contributes to the confusion regarding the nature of postmodern products with remarks like this one:

> In film or in rock, however, a certain historical logic can be reintroduced by the hypothesis that such newer media recapitulate the evolutionary stages or breaks between realism, modernism and postmodernism, in a compressed time span, such that the Beatles and the Stones occupy the high modernist moment embodied by the "auteurs" of 1950s and 1960s art films, "Politics of Theory," p. 419;

such a cultural determinism as this seeks to enlarge a monolithic modernism to include anything not produced by the current generation (the last twenty years or so) and provides an elitest formula for designating the postmodern on the basis of some very thin filaments; there is also a sense of "fear of influence" (reminiscent of Harold Bloom's The Anxiety Of Influence, also an elitest scheme); after all, it was "auteur" filmakers who intensified the dialectic against mainstream filmic realism and who promoted a

definition of cinema as an essentially expressionistic medium, a view expressed by Benjamin and a focus of this study, although it is simplistic to view all "auteurs" in a common political context; regarding music, the essential grounding of rock is in blues music, hardly a "high modernist" medium, and groups like the Rolling Stones and the Doors are essentially blues groups; the case of the Beatles is more complex, owing to the diverse directions of its songwriters; the case for reification of rock is often demonstrated in the latter stages of a band's career, when record companies exert greater control over artistic content, and the product itself generates more capital; this factor is often reduced when highly successful bands, like the Rolling Stones, organize their own companies to maintain control of both content and capital; the politicization of rock begins, like jazz and blues before it, with the repression and redirection of sexuality by institutional cultural forces who view rock as "animalistic" (an implicitly racist attack against its roots in Black music forms); the explicit eroticism of rock (for example, the lyrics to "Louie Louie") defines an alternative, political stance that is extended to other political issues, like the Vietman war or capital fascism in general; even the reification of "pop" music forms has been seriously challenged by Ralph Bakshi in his important film American Pop which situates popular music in a political context of class struggle for most of the twentieth century; in any case, it seems inconsistent for Jameson to characterize postmodernism as a broad cultural movement at the same time that he is limiting postmodern cultural praxis to a highly limited number of artists.

1.5 Derrida's reference to "freeplay" affirms another theoretical paradigm associated with postmodernism, game theory; see also the next note.

1.6 Besides Rabkin and Todorov, Manlove considers W. R. Irwin's "fantasies subscribing to his notion of 'play,' or 'the game of the impossible'," and Rosemary Jackson's "'subversive fantasies' by Poe, Stevenson, Dostoevsky, Kafka, or Pynchon," "The Elusiveness of Fantasy," p. 53; actually, either of these approaches has a stronger probability of providing an inclusive, theoretical base for the study of twentieth-century "fantasy" than does the presence of the supernatural; this study's emphasis on surreal-expressionist production coheres with Jackson's "subversive fantasies."

1.7 This discussion of the relationship of Poe's "William Wilson" and of Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray to expressionistic writing is more fully developed in

"Narrative Discourse in Poe: Reciprocity and 'William Wilson'."

1.8 Metz's study Psychoanalysis and Cinema (1975-82) explores the imaginary qualities of both signifier and referent; see also "Metz's Move" by Bertrand Augst which solidifies the connections of Metz's work to the "game" of film theory, Camera Obscura 7 (1985): 31-41.

1.9 See Crumb, "'The Drum': Postmodernity and Textuality."

Chapter Two

2.1 Aristotle's preference for the dramatic form is described in The Poetics, 115; it is also discussed in "'The Drum': Postmodernity and Textuality"; his preference:

> partly based on the presence of music and spectacle in that genre, to this extent goes beyond what are ordinarily considered the features of verbal literature. The addition of music to literary production renders the presentation more complex; the work no longer consists of writing only, and the writing lends its significance to the music. With respect to spectacle, the versimilitude of a text that presents an image of itself is overdetermined, for such an image exists in reality whether or not it may be called "accurate." . . . [These] additional forms of aural and visual presentation . . . [develop] an aggregated presentation, a multi-media multiplex. . . . Thus, it is not surprising that "as an organized literary movement expressionism was strongest in the theater in the 1920's, and its entry into other literary forms was probably through the stage" (Holman),

Crumb, 69-70.

2.2 Arrowsmith describes the complex context of this part of the novel:

> if Eumolpus, for instance, in his epic on the civil wars appears as a standard laudator temporis acti with his stale denunciation of a Rome turned rotten and effeminate through the loss of homely Republican virtues, Petronius' point is not what Eumolpus says but the contrast between his pretensions here and his practices elsewhere, xiii;

even if one grants Eumolpus' intention to put it rightly, there is no assurance that this "epic" will not be corrupted somehow, given such a dubious context; the expressionistic character of Petronius' writing, which finds a strong

parallel in the Restoration writings of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, is discussed in "Dialog, Decadence, and Expressionism" in Compendius Conversations.

2.3 Chamber's position is summarized here: canonicity is dialog; any form of dialogic discourse implies canonical conclusions. Chambers recognizes within irony two forms with respect to the canon: the ironic and the ironical. This typology "boils down to differentiating between ironizing (opposing) the system (of which one is a part) [ironic] and ironizing (opposing) the product of the system (as if one were not part of the system) [ironical]" (21), "Dialog, Decadence, and Expressionism," 143; from this perspective, only the ironic form of irony is systemic and explicitly metatextual, since the ironical form does not question canonical values by only seeking to show that a given work conforms to those values; therefore, only the ironic form is expressionistic since its dialectic opposition to the system is explicitly political, while the ironical form is dialogical with respect to content (it does not propose an alternative context).

2.4 Explicitly political expression occurs in both Petronius and Rochester: two examples include Encolpius' hedonist manifesto, which also reads as implied authorial discourse, and Rochester's "A Satyr on Charles II," "Dialog, Decadence, and Expressionism," 145, 147.

2.5 Peithman refers here to "Usher Unveiled" by Barton Levi St. Armand in Poe Studies, vol.5, who shows that "the painting, and the crypt in which Madeline is buried refer to alchemical symbols," 68, n. 35.

2.6 James Thomson's "Proem" is written in twenty-two sections, the first unnumbered and the last numbered twenty-one, corresponding to the twenty-two major arcana of the Tarot, which are numbered zero through twenty-one; Thomson's correlation goes far beyond the numbering scheme, for the imagery in each section of his poem develops images from the arcanum associated by number with the poem; even precedent to Thomson, the Shelley's ought to be recognized for their more subtle use of Tarot images; Percy Shelley uses several images from the major arcana in his poem of political protest "The Mask of Anarchy," and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein develops imagery from Arcanum Eighteen, "The Moon," throughout the course of this novel; "The Moon" may also be the source of an important motif in Kafka's The Metamorphosis (see Chapter four, "Notes").

Chapter Three

3.1 Regrettably, the scope of this study does not allow a full engagement with Metz's impressive work contained in Language And Cinema, partly because of space and partly because of the attempt here to approach this question from the other direction, of an image priority over language; it should be noted, though, that the use of the term "cinematic" in this study is not equivalent to Metz's use; Metz conceives that only a "filmic writing" is possible, although his recognition that "film" plays the role of "'legitimate interlocutor'" in modern writing "(writing as a textual activity)" coheres with this study's recognition of "cinematic" incursions into the written text, 285.

3.2 "The 'aura' of the original, single work of genius is replaced, as Benjamin foresaw, by the mechanical reproduction of fragments of history," A Poetics Of Postmodernism, 181.

3.3 To help the reader appreciate Benjamin's contribution to this theoretical synthesis, here follows a summary of Benjamin's essay grouped under three headings with section numbers attached to those headings and with parenthetical pagination for specific propositions:

1) Representation (I-VII, IX): mechanical reproduction of art has produced two different manifestations, reproductions of art and the art of film (218); the "aura" of art works withers, detaching the reproduced object from the domain of tradition (221); the aura of art, like natural objects, can be described as the image of its distance which is reduced by reproduction implying a "sense of universal equality of things," an adjustment of reality to the masses and of the masses to reality (222-23); magical and ritual contexts of art become transformed by this erosion of authenticity, and a new context becomes the basis for art, that of politics (224); quantitative increases in the exhibition of art bring about a qualitative change in the function of art as exemplified by film and photography (225); pictures become historical evidence with hidden implications requiring a specific approach, captions not free contemplation, and film intensifies this condition (226) [consider the written dialogue in silent films and the sound track in modern film]; the founding of film in mechanical reproduction depersonalizes the actor, and film art leaves the realm of the "beautiful semblance" when such mimetic selectiveness had been art's justification (230).

2) Reception (VIII, X, XII, XIV, XV): since the actor performs for the camera which takes the position of the audience, the audience critiques the optical tests provided by the camera (228-29); here the defamiliarization of the actor is like a reproduced "mirror-image," and since

everyone is reproducible the film audience is composed of experts which results in the loss of the basic character of the author/public relationship [writers write for writers, not readers] (231-32); this new relation between the masses and art characterized as a simultaneous collective experience results in the mass rejecting in traditional forms the same material it can accept in a collective form (234-35); Dada anticipated film effects through its relentless destruction of the aura, and it became a tactile art that happened to the spectator (237-28); the increased mass of participation changes the mode of participation from contemplation to distraction -- tactile appropriation comes about less by attention than by habit -- a state or habit of distraction grounds reception, especially in film, the public as absent-minded examiner, critics not required to be attentive (239-41).

3) Film discourse (VI, VII, IX, XI, XII, XIII, XIV): regarding captions, in film the meaning of each single frame appears to be prescribed by the sequence of all preceding ones (226); that earlier attempts to define film read ritual elements into it shows how film can express the marvelous and the supernatural naturally and persuasively (227-28); film raises spectacle to a new level, and the presentation of natural reality has become the height of artifice -- film consists of multiple fragments assembled under a new law (233-34); film deepens apperception by providing imcomparably more precise statements that bring art and science together, unconscious optics illumined like unconscious impulses by psychoanalysis (235-37); the mode of film provides shock which must be met by a heightened presence of mind, and, more, the shock of film reception is not limited to the "moral" (238), "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 217-51.

3.4 See Crumb, "'The Drum': Postmodernity and Textuality," 72-73.

3.5 The material image is partly an adaptation to the analysis of literary representation of Hillman's psychic image, presented in his essay Archetypal Psychology.

3.6 This definition has been previously published in "Image Strategies in Postmodernism: Borges' 'The Immortal'" as part of the collection BORGES: Craft of Fiction.

3.7 See "Sweets of Sin: Joyce's Ulysses and Swinburne's 'Dolores'," an essay in the James Joyce Quarterly.

3.8 It is evident that Chew considers Swinburne's entire poem to be a litany, but in the essay on Joyce and Swinburne a litanic substructure is distinguished made up of the shortened final stanza lines such that:

pairing the halfline refrains reveals the litanic infrastructure. Here are the refrains of stanzas thirteen to twenty-four:

13. Our Lady of Pain
14. And blind as the night
15. Our Lady of Pain
16. And gray as the world
17. Our Lady of Pain
18. As wine shed for me
19. Our Lady of Pain
20. Make barren our lives
21. Our Lady of Pain
22. The myrtle to death
23. Our Lady of Pain
24. To sweeten the sin

The refrains of stanzas thirty-nine to forty-four read:

39. Our Lady of Pain
40. A visible god
41. Our Lady of Pain
42. A goddess new-born
43. Our Lady of Pain
44. A mother of gods

The mockery of litanic form with concepts opposed to conventionally religious ideas is at once satiric and satanic. The emphasis is provided to show the connection to Joyce's invented novel title Sweets of Sin; JJQ, 241.

3.9 This passage also contains a tacit allusion, not mentioned in the published discussion, to Marlowe's play Doctor Faustus:

> From thence to Venice, Padua, and the (rest),/ In one of which a sumptuous temple stands/ That threats the stars with her aspiring top (III. 1. 16-18), Marlowe, 362.

Chapter Four

4.1 David Wills and Alec McHoul in their essay "Almost but not quite me . . ." discuss, among other things, more recent theories, particularly of Barthes and of Foucault, which argue: "the return to the authorial origin is limiting, politically motivated, conservative and unnecessarily psychological," Writing Pynchon, 136; with the destruction of the claim of the author as sole source for meaning in text develops a stronger recognition of the role of the reader in producing such meaning.

4.2 Nahum N. Glatzer provides in his chronology of Kafka the dates 1911-14 as "working on Amerika" with the main work done during 1911-12; the story "In the Penal Colony" was written in October, 1914 with the rest of that year spent on the composition of The Trial; it appears that

the "writing-desk" was precedent to the execution machine, but during a relatively brief period when he was engaged in writing some of his most complex and important works, Franz Kafka: The Complete Stories, 476-77.

4.3 Paul N. Siegal accepts Breton's assertion that Leon Trotsky contributed most of "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art" (1938), incuding this statement on Marx:

> The conception of the writer's function which the young Marx worked out is worth recalling . . . "The writer by no means looks on his work as a means. It is an end in itself and so little a means in the eyes of himself and others that if necessary he sacrifices his existence to the existence of his work, Leon Trotsky on Literature and Art, 115, 119.

4.4 Jung believes the emotional component of the shadow archetype helps one to recognize its involvement: "If you feel an overwhelming rage coming up in you when a friend reproaches you about a fault, you can be fairly sure that at this point you will find a part of your shadow, of which you are unconscious," Man and his Symbols, 174.

4.5 Freud explains how animals represent a variety of libidinal features in dreams:

> many of the beasts which are used as genital symbols in mythology and folklore play the same part in dreams: e.g. fishes, snails, cats, mice (on account of the pubic hair), and above all those most important symbols of the male organ -- snakes. Small animals and vermin represent small children -- for instance, undesired brothers and sisters. Being plagued with vermin is often a sign of pregnancy; wild beasts are as a rule employed by the dream-work to represent passionate impulses of which the dreamer is afraid, whether they are his own or those of other people. (It then needs only a slight displacement for the wild beasts to come to represent the people who are possessed by these passions. We have not far to go from here to cases in which a dreaded father is represented by a beast of prey or a dog or a wild horse -- a form of representation recalling totemism.) It might be said that wild beasts are used to represent the libido, a force dreaded by the ego and combatted by means of repression. It often happens, too, that the dreamer separates off his neurosis, his "sick personality," from himself and depicts it as an independent person. [1919.], The Interpretation of Dreams, 392, 445.

4.6 Freud describes dream "relations of similarity":

> Parallels or instances of "just as" inherent in the material of the dream-thoughts constitute the first foundations for the construction of a dream; and no inconsiderable part of the dream-work consists in preparing fresh parallels where those which are already present cannot find their way into the dream owing to the censorship imposed by resistance. The representation of the relation of similarity is assisted by the tendency of the dream-work towards condensation,

The Interpretation of Dreams, 355.

4.7 Cocteau's fable "The Look of Death" is included in the anthology of the fantastic edited by Borges, Ocampo, and Casares; since it is brief, for convenience it is quoted in its entirety:

> A young Persian gardener said to his Prince:
> "Save me! I met Death in the garden this morning, and he gave me a threatening look. I wish that tonight, by some miracle, I might be far away, in Ispahan."
> The Prince lent him his swiftest horse.
> That afternoon, as he was walking in the garden, the Prince came face to face with Death. "Why," he asked, "did you give my gardener a threatening look this morning?"
> "It was not a threatening look," replied Death. "It was an expression of surprise. For I saw him here this morning, and I knew that I would take him in Ispahan tonight,"

The Book Of Fantasy, 96; this anthology also includes "Josephine the Singer, or The Mouse Folk" and "Before the Law" by Kafka.

4.8 References to Burroughs' development of images of which Kafka is the unmistakable source are included here because this recognition is not forthcoming from major studies; this seems to stem from Burroughs' ambivalent status as a "canonical" figure; Sandbank omits any discussion of Burroughs from his chapter on Kafka's limited influence on American writers, namely, Barthes, Vonnegut, and Pynchon, After Kafka: The Influence of Kafka's Fiction, 148-49; this last is surprising since Pynchon has always acknowledged Burroughs as a major influence on his own writing; Skerl's ommission seems to develop from an opposing viewpoint in that Burroughs is built up into a major figure almost wholly original: "Burroughs has never attributed any influence, literary or otherwise, to his schooling," William Burroughs, 6; this seems a strange remark from an author who has done so much collaborative work with other writers.

4.9 See The Soft Machine, "The Mayan Caper," 97; also, Nova Express, "The Chinese Laundry," 59.

4.10 This entry is confusing in that Katz credits Cavalcanti with the direction of only one episode while the film credits him with its direction.

4.11 Poe's influential story probably provided a pattern for Oscar Wilde's novel The Picture of Dorian Gray and may have reached Kafka as well:

> The material image of reciprocal violence presented by Poe in "William Wilson" also recurs in Kafka: "and was it only fancy which induced me to believe that, with the increase of my own firmness, that of my tormentor underwent a proportional diminuation" (The Unabridged Edgar Allan Poe 564),

Crumb, "Narrative Discourse in Poe: Reciprocity and 'William Wilson'," 33, 40-41.

4.12 In an interview, Welles talks about the "formal" qualities of Kafka's writing, but in this same interview Peter Bogdonovich tells a story about a European showing of Welles' The Trial which they attended together; they both found themselves laughing at what was going on in the film, although the rest of the audience remained deadly serious; this is an excellent example of the "Kafka affect"; apparently, even Welles succumbed, With Orson Welles: Stories From A Life In Film.

4.13 A comparison of Bertolucci's The Last Emperor with Costa-Gavras' The Confession confirms Bertolucci's concern with films antecedent to his productions; this is even more apparent in Last Tango In Paris where Bertolucci includes allusions to many "Paris-centered" works, including Cocteau's Orpheus and the works of Samuel Beckett.

4.14 Poe's school has proliferated in other writers as well: consider "the language of Borges' labyrinthine descriptions in 'The Immortal'," Crumb, "Narrative Discourse in Poe: Reciprocity and 'William Wilson'," 40; Mervyn Peakes' Gormenghast castle is a more recent elaboration, likely based on Poe's and Kafka's (1946).

Chapter Five

5.1 Poe uses this word "thus" both as a discursive identifier to connect specific sections of this story and as a negative descriptive term which is revealed only at the end of this story to have the meaning "the same," referring to the features of the two William Wilsons, Crumb, 39.

5.2 Hutchings notes the "uncanny [if coincidental] resemblance" of Beckett's narrator to the head of Nick Chopper in Frank Baum's The Tin Woodman of Oz (1918); he also discusses biblical and medieval sources.

5.3 Fanizza cites P. de Boisdeffre, Une histoire vivant de la litterature d'aujourd'hui (Paris, 1959), p. 304.

5.4 Chambers explains how canonicity is a systemic dialogue rather than a set of rigid values exemplified by particular works.

5.5 Rabinovitz notes the importance of "unreliable narrative [as] an important structural device in Murphy and shows how "many of the narrator's seemingly plausible statements are in some way misleading or inconsistent," p. 58.

5.6 Shulz finds "Beckett and Hegel seemingly in agreement on the impossibility of a meaningful art to exist in our time," p.94, and Hegel asserts "the death of classical art," p. 95.

5.7 Kawin also cites Coe who characterizes reality's time in Beckett as an "instantaneous present," Samuel Beckett, p.17.

5.8 Schulze's chapter "Beckett and Descartes" concludes:

> for the Beckettian hero, nothingness is the ultimate perfection . . . nothing, silence, absence. The Cartesian who imagines himself placed between God (existence) and nothing (non-existence) (M [Molloy], 112), sharing in both and moving toward the latter in Beckett's novels learns the perfection, ultimate (non-) existence, does not 'live,' that its stasis defies definition and attachment," pp 31-36, 36.

5.9 This study is somewhat opposed to Friedberg's extension of Benjamin's "'entirely new formations of the subject'" to include the postmodern subject" since this study takes as axiomatic Benjamin's "new formations" as already descriptive of postmodern culture, a culture opposed to classical aesthetic principles, p. 419.

5.10 This study focuses on two books on Beckett's mythic apect, Doll's monograph and Burkman's collection (including an essay by Doll).

5.11 Doll provides an extensive list of philosophical approaches to Beckett, p. 83, n. 1; this list does not include Schulze's monograph.

5.12 Ellman and O'Clair provide background on this poem:

> "Whoroscope" was Beckett's first important work; it was written at high speed as his entry in a competition sponsored by Nancy Cunard's Hour Press, the prize to be given for the best poem of less than 100 lines about the passage of time. It is based on a biography of . . . Descartes . . . and it won the prize, p. 711, n. 1.

5.13 Beckett is joking about Descartes' need for a more material substance than the substance that Descartes derived from his cogito: "(1) that this 'I' whose existence he has proved is a substance whose whole essence is to think and (2) that this substance is 'really distinct' from any physical body that he has," Williams, 348; of course, an omelet made from Descartes' substance would be as insubstantial as Plato's "cave phantoms."

5.14 Beckett replaces Descartes' "I think" with "to err," suggesting the propensity to err as prior to personal existence; there is a further joke suggesting that Descartes' existence is itself a mistake by ascribing the impersonal "to err" to an act of the "creator" (a cosmic error on the order of Gregor's transformation in Kafka's The Metamorphosis); further, if Descartes cannot sustain himself on Plato's ideas ("cave phantoms"), then he is much more likely to err, since this form of contempt may easily lead to a mistake in judgment, and Beckett attributes many such mistakes to Descartes.

5.15 The confusion of "clearly and distinctly perceiving" and belief is an effect of Descartes' system, not his proposition, "which consists in the fact that if assent can always be withheld, even from propositions as powerful as the cogito, it is unclear what could ever suffice to prevent the assent from being withheld," Willams, 351.

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